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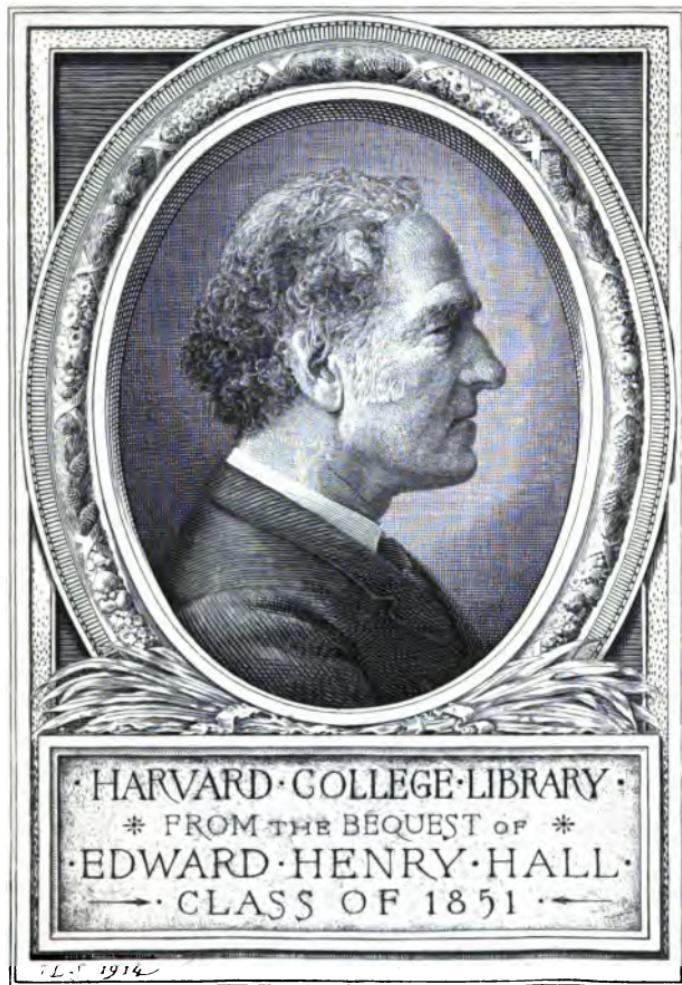
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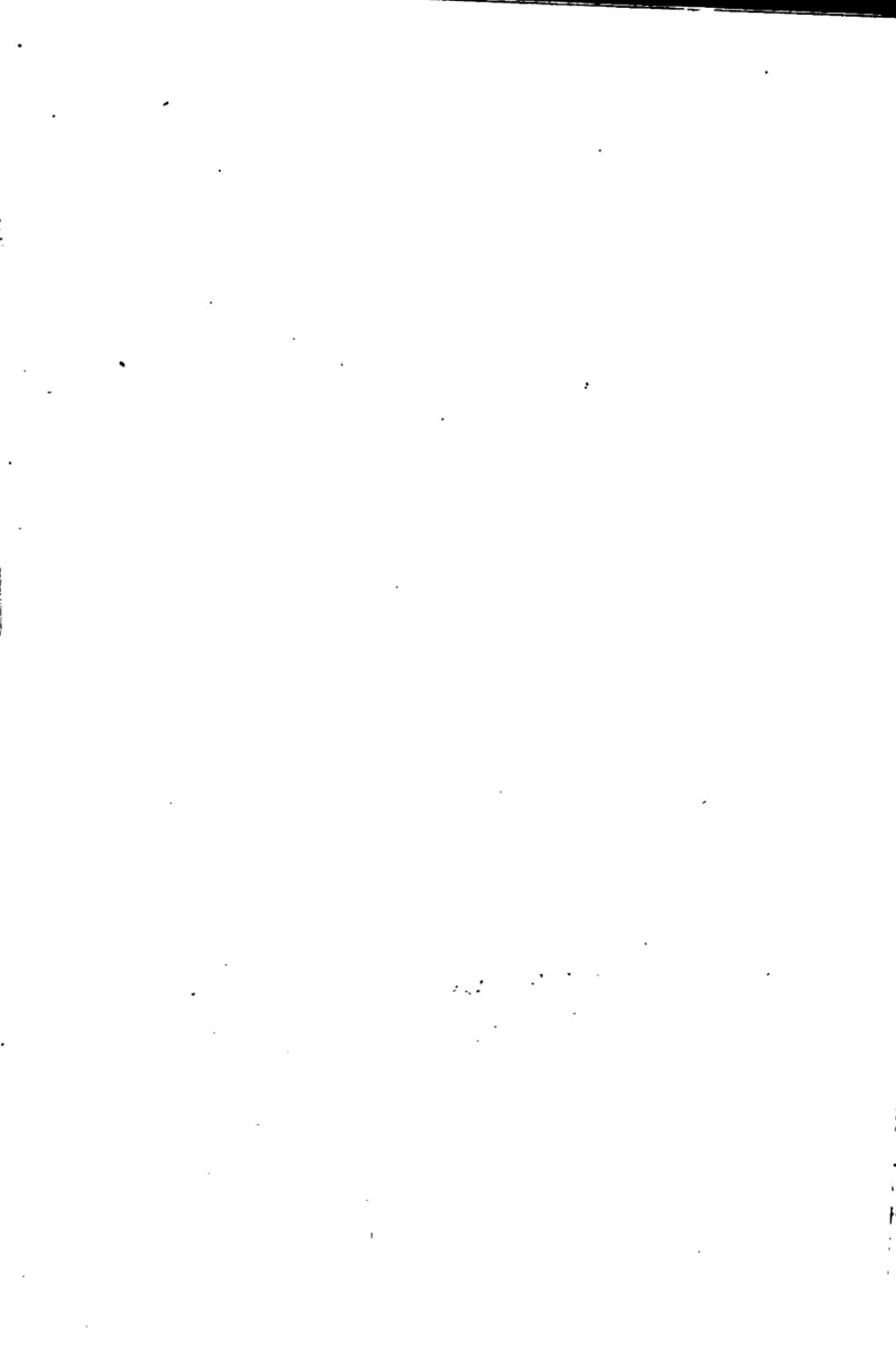
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*Leaves  
from a  
Cambridge  
Note-Book*

O. J. DUNLOP.



TL. 1914





LEAVES

FROM A

CAMBRIDGE NOTE-BOOK

BY

O. J. DUNLOP

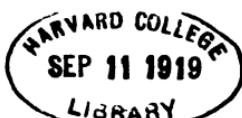
CAMBRIDGE

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DEAR TWO, T. K. AND M. R. M.,

This book can give you no picture of Cambridge life for it is but a mere blur of the blue and golden days. But you, Theo, my canny Scots-woman, will need no telling that, whatever we may do later, it would be injudicious of us now to give to the world more leaves from our note-books than I have given it here. I know this book is a narrow chink through which no one can win aught but a peep of a corner of our breezy Cambridge, and yet I hope that it may bring some happy memories to every man and woman who has loved the Cam. And, since I have nothing else to offer you, I ask you to accept these essays for the sake of what is, perhaps, the richest gift of Cambridge to her sons and daughters, an all-time friendship.

O. J. D.

*October 1907.*

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## I.

### CAMBRIDGE ROADS.

IT was in the Lent Term towards the time when the coming of Spring is no longer an illusion that we rose up with the first bird-call, shook the dew from laden grass-blades, and cried "Good morning" to the road. For Spring and the road were calling to us, and there is no gainsaying these mighty voices. They have the authority of the Universal in their tones. For the spirit of Spring is of boundless space and of all time, it pervades the country not alone, but cities and the sea. And the cry of all roads is of travel out into the four corners of the world; and strong-voiced is this Roman road of ours which has journeyed from many centuries ago, and will roll on imperturbably to aeons wrapped in the blue distance.

Upon a Spring morning there is no better comrade than a road. For when Spring is in the blood, whatever age our bodies, we ourselves are young.

And we have all the desire of youth for achievement ; we are filled with eager vigour, speed and space our needs !

There is swiftness in a road, and therefore is it a meet companion for young-blooded Springtime. It rushes ahead of you, white between the brown hedges, to a pin-point. Overtake fifty yards of it in strong exhilarating strides, and, behold, it has fled on before you, and spins through a new stretch of country, from whence it calls to you to hasten, hasten !

And of all roads the straight is the best, and this is well, for such are the greater part in Cambridgeshire, and content is of advantage to a man. A straight road is good to see in the vigour of Spring. It is as the body should be, straight in backbone, firm in sinew. A straight road is as full of sap and as clean-limbed as a pine, which is the best of singers in the youth of the year, though in Winter a gnarled oak touches the soul more closely.

Now our poets have taught wrongly of Springtime's needs, and it is due to them that the young year seems a time of lovers' lanes and dingle dells. I like not these erotic people who moon in trysting places ! I would have you away out here in the fresh breezes, where the roads whirl out before you and spread strong arms through this pasture and plough-land which they love. Here, where the ring of your foot is as sweet to you as the thrushes' trill ;

where the vigour of the road fires you until your whole being tingles with power, and the glance of your eye is as keen as the road-line, and your body as supple ! Here it is good to feel the crisp road beneath your foot, and to draw deep breaths of the plough-scented breeze !

A straight road over a flat land leads into the sky, which holds within it the highest ; and it leads into the distance, and in the distance lie all possibilities. Such a road is all freedom and adventure and noble aspiration, and therefore is it the road for youth. Hills are wonderful but they are unchangingly old. The heavens skim them, and whisper the secret of life which is the riddle of death. Therefore the hills are not for young-eyed Spring. When the year is fuller I will go to the mountains, where the world ponders, and in their mystery and glory stand shoulder to shoulder with the grave-eyed comrades of men. Fragrant are valleys, but their shade and their lanes are for Summer. To abide there in Spring is to dwell in a rut the year through. For Spring there is no land like flat land and the levels of Cambridge. Here all is spaciousness. Great-hearted fields and generous meadows stretch away and away into blue distance, and on and on into the sky. Never a barrier to cramp that great spirit which you and the road share !

In this country there is breath for trees. Oaks

grow unlopped and massive ; elms too may reach out long arms, and sing their very souls into an ecstasy of daintiest boughs and twigs, wood no longer mere feathers against the blue.

Even and free is the lie of the earth, but monotonous never, for here the land swells to a rise which the wind mocks at, and low rounded hills cuddle the coppices.

The hedges leap out of brown woods, and with lean brown limbs run helter-skelter through the fields, with a bob to the dips in the land. The far away land lies blue and the sky is blue, but the distance between is pearly grey, and whether it be sky or plain only an occasional spire can tell us. And amidst all this blue and brown the earth throbs with pleasurable colour where rich red plough-land rejoices the eye.

It is when walking in such a land that you can acquire an entire county. For your gleaming road flings loving arms to left and right, and embraces in its strong grasp, woods and fields and nestling farmsteads. And a part of you follows your road down these byways, until you too have the whole country in your arms.

The epitome of conceit, by name a signpost, stands by the side, pointing a wooden finger to a distant town. It has a perky cock-o'-my-walk air, for it thinks that our highroad is marching at its bidding.

As if our great strong-natured fellow could be checked or guided by that whipper-snapper ! You will see many such signposts all the world over. If you are simple-minded you will be overwhelmed by their omniscience and omnipotence. But ever will you find them ignorant of two things, reverence, and their own limitations. Sometimes they will show you their parks and their villagers and their sunshine, as if they had made God and all the world ; these are the rich signposts in fur coats and motor-cars. Or they will display with personal pride the virtues and graces of their sons and daughters. As though mean signposts had aught to do with nobility of life !

It is nine o'clock or more now, and the wind blows keenly, for the road rises here, and adds another league of blue to the view on either hand. Nine o'clock, and what better place for breakfast than this five-barred gate ? Great is the pleasure of munching in a fresh clean world when fleecy clouds race each other across the sky, and the sun throws a beam on buds full of promise !

There are the voices of men calling to their teams at the plough. Down to join them goes a boy with a sallow face. It is a sad sight to see in the country, where all should be brown and jolly. But he whistles blithely and no doubt thinks himself a handsome fellow.

---

### Up goes a lark, and

"Singing till his heaven fills,  
'Tis love of earth that he instils,  
And ever winging up and up,  
Our valley is his golden cup,  
And he the wine which overflows  
To lift us with him as he goes:  
The woods and brooks, the sheep and kine  
He is, the hills, the human line,  
The meadows green, the fallows brown,  
The dreams of labour in the town;  
He sings the sap, the quickened veins;  
The wedded song of sun and rains  
He is, the dance of children, thanks  
Of sowers, shout of primrose banks,  
The eye of violets while they breathe...."

The whole earth follows his voice, and until he drops we wait by the field-side. Now the road shouts before us in the very joy of its being, and we hurry after it. Here a farm lies back from the highway with apple orchard breasting the hedge. Four perjink windows eye us from beneath the thatch, and a slip of a garden minces round the house to the farm-yard, where there is a bewildering disarray of roofs over-lapping and jostling one another. Which is barn's or byre's, hen's or haystack's goodness knows, they don't! The smoke from the chimney is the only sign of life, for the men are in the fields, and the women are at their work within. It curls upwards slyly, hoping to escape, but the wind comes and catches it a smack in the face.

Here are four roads dancing a quadrille to the music of a stone-breaker. Being a careful man, he protects his eyes with wire guards, but through them the world must be darkened, I fancy. Yet perhaps the earth and he are little acquainted, and his heart's world is centred in the pipe and bottle, snuggling on his coat behind him.

When a man thrusts his world in the rear so that he may not neglect his labour, you may be sure that it is drudgery that he is at. The doer of real work has no need to pray that he may eschew the world with the flesh and the devil. For work, as it should be, is a well-loved friend, and the world is its comrade, not its rival. Work is splendid and invigorating, it is the Viking spirit of the world. It is natural and desirable, because therein alone can a man fulfil himself. But this mockery of work, this sodden down-at-heel drudgery, is contrary to nature. Flatter yourself that it is the price of progress if you will. But it is not a necessary attendant upon evolution. Manual work we must have, hard work; but it is the spirit and not the form of work that makes it mean.

This poor fellow cannot feel the spirit of work, and so he labours on through his task with a leaden mind. To him it is a bitterness to be endured only for the bottle's welfare. Yet perhaps he has his alleviations. This is a comely country, and he dwells

in one of those pleasant houses which straggle down the road-side, with their tidy garden patches, red roofs, and well-closed windows.

Milestones are unnecessary reminders of duties which we have left behind us. They have been put on this road simply to annoy our two selves, by the people who make hats and examinations and all those kinds of things. If it were not for these smug stones, white-livered cravens cowering at the road-side, we would say there was no reason for ever turning. We do say it stoutly. But we do not believe it when the shadows slip slantwise like a faun's smile, mocking us. For we know that there are nights to "keep," and that Cambridge is calling to us to return.

The by-roads are somnolent, and peep at us from half-closed eyes as the shadows steal up and hush them to sleep. Light fades, and the joy-giving day drops to night like the lark to earth when his song is done.

But the road, our road, the great Roman road, this lusty gracious musical road, turns, like the good-natured fellow he is, and comes back with us through the twilight. Hours make no change in the heart of him, though in the darkness he is graver than in the early dawn. But still he will shout out some marching song, a song universal, which no man can sing though all know it well who are good road-fellows.

I ask you, is there anything more attractive than a road? In what a friendly spirit he suits his long stride to our weary steps, and no longer leaps rapidly ahead of us, but, in the pleasing doubtfulness of his shadowed line, hides our slow advance. So are we charmed to freshness by the witchery of the unfathomed. And when Cambridge looms against the sky we think that it must have run half way to meet us. The road is for a night's march and will on, but here is our halting-place. And at the gate we bid him "God speed!"

## II.

### THE CRANKS OF CAMBRIDGE.

THERE is no man yet who has won a reputation but he had some crank or other ; indeed, oddities in manner and behaviour are often the head-lights of genius, warning us that here is greatness in our midst. Nature is full of a dry humour, and she delights in giving a whimsical twist to those whom she blesses with forceful personality, so that you will with difficulty lay your finger upon a great man who had not some strange habits.

As with men so it is with places, and Cambridge, who has a world-wide reputation, has undoubtedly her cranks. The most casual observer could not fail to mark down some of them. Even a foreigner, to whom our entire mode of life must appear peculiar, picked out immediately one of our cranky ways. She told me, her eyes round with sympathy and sorrow, of the poor young men who walk our streets ; so poor,

*“stahler, stahler Gutter !”*, poor, poor, boys, that they wear the ragged cloak. “But they have the brilliant socks !” she said. “Is this, then, what your Milton calls the light fantastic toes ?”

Ah, the brilliant socks ! Here indeed is one of our cranks, a prominent whimsicality, confounding the foreigner, who saw it peeping from beneath the ragged gown, outshining in its brilliance the many-coloured coat of Joseph. Spotted and striped, orange, purple, green, this crank glows, in a glory of colour and in a wealth of bold designs, from end to end of Cambridge, cheering her grey pavements even in dull and sloppy weather, and cheering immeasurably the hearts of her tattered sons. It has a powerful grip, this crank of ours, and pounces upon all and sundry. Be you never so serious, I vouch for it that, if you come to Cambridge, you will be socked in pink or red ! For, concentrating in itself all the pomps and vanities, this crank is irresistible ; and the heart of every man among us is swayed by each caprice of the wilful and chameleon-natured sock. It trips the toes of sober virtue, it twines itself around the very legs of wranglers, and artfully enwraps tutorial feet.

Any one who travels by the railway to the University will meet at once another of our strange conceits. This is our station. Ours is no commonplace arrangement of platforms, trucks, and labels ! Long ago we learnt the hopelessness of trying to find our

luggage, a cab, or a porter here, and since we are bereft of the usual employments of travellers, we cannot be expected to assume their professional air of bustle and hurry. Chattering in idle groups, strolling hands in pockets, or lounging with a pipe in mouth, we are utterly detached from steam-engines and Bath buns. We discard the excited gestures, the tricks and habits, of the ordinary traveller, and revel to the full in our crank, our station, which is the hall of a brilliant *Conversazione*, or a Pump-room at the height of its season, aught but the mundane thing of other towns.

Another famous peculiarity of ours is Market Hill. It was so called to please the imagination and set it climbing, even as men conjure up sea-views and meadow-banks by the names of their suburban villas. At any rate, there is no hill here, and flat as the proverbial pancake runs this street. It is just a smile, a gentle jeer, slyly mocking the man of the hills, and quizzing to all time those cantankerous people who are ever searching for what they cannot find, struggling to ruffle plains into mountains, and spending their holidays miserably on a Swiss glacier because it lacks historic interest. I ask you is there any other town which has a grin for street?

Upon note-books rests another of our cranks. They are built for us in cloth of various colours, blue, red, green, brown and mustard; and we all keep

a pleasing variety of gaily coloured books. But only those who understand the subtleties of life really appreciate this crank, since they alone have the skill necessary for the manipulation of the various colours according to their own dress and the subject of the lecture. I have noticed that there are certain people who never appear at ease unless their note-books match their ties or the ribbons of their hats. They have the guilty air of a man who suddenly awakes to the fact that he is wearing a frock-coat and a bowler hat. You and I may smile together at this crank, but nevertheless there is, as the saying goes, something in it ; for I know very well that no lectures were more enjoyable than those to which I listened from beneath a red hat, with a red note-book, of the identical shade, open upon my knee. The minutes flew !

We have many cranks of a linguistic sort, words and phrases to meet our peculiar needs ; and we have the quaintest little regulations, all our own, little old-fashioned, maiden-aunt, rules, that patter along our sunny ways in their close poke-bonnets. It is strange how unappreciative man can be ; he will even pat these maiden-aunts upon the head, and pass them by without any further notice ! Yet they are deserving of esteem, for they have trotted courageously to us through hundreds of years ; and to any one who appreciates cranks they will be the dearest, since the crankiest, of possessions.

I have sometimes heard strangers condoling with us for our narrow streets. This is a serious blunder upon their parts. For we are intensely proud of them ; they are one of the features of the place, and you might as well lament with a man whose medal is hanging over his pinned-up, empty, coat-sleeve. He has something better than an arm, and we have something which we value more than space, an honourable and noticeable crank. What though Bridge Street is blocked with carts and we cannot ride at more than a foot's pace ? We have but the more leisure in which to appreciate the greatness of Cambridge as exemplified in the whimsical ways of her streets.

I have never known any other town whose inhabitants had as great a predilection for shopping as have those of Cambridge. Here we are at it all day long. You cannot enter a shop but you find a dozen young men and women purchasing soap, or tea-leaves, or window-curtains. Any one might think that Cambridge undergraduates devour the best vegetable down cushions and spend their hours of relaxation in breaking tea-pots ; or that the ladies have formed an Art Club for which they model, in new bread, dainty statuettes, since any and every day you will see them, at lecture time, darting into bakeries, or bearing triumphantly through our streets long rolls of fragrant bread. Shopping is undoubtedly one of our cranks : we will buy anything of any shape, scent, colour, or substance, whether we can

afford it or no, and whether we want it or not. Thus, shop-keeping is an easy business in Cambridge, and even an inexperienced young man would make his fortune here. For he is rid of the difficulty of catering for the tastes of his customers. He may display whatever he likes in his window, and be sure of a sale. We will take anything that is offered without a murmur, for it makes no difference to us whether we buy a china pig or a frying-pan ; either transaction will gratify our whim for shopping. I have only one word of caution to give the beginner : he should beware of exposing in his window certain agricultural implements, for the sight of them is peculiarly irritating to many a Cambridge man, and the young vendor might, one merry morning, find that his plate-glass was in fragments.

The gods undoubtedly deserve our gratitude for their creation of cranks, without which we should stand paralysed, frozen with awe, in the presence of greatness. But these little whimsicalities humanise genius, they are pegs tethering the transcendent to our well-known earth, they are rungs of a ladder up which we ordinary mortals may climb to an acquaintanceship with the wondrous and the rare, they are the reassuring sceptres held out by the great Ahasuerus to the trembling Esther. Through this majestic University we should walk on the tips of our scared, pale, toes, if it were not for the human touch

of our cranks. But they twinkle through the town, setting us at ease: Adam has no fear of Eve, for there is between them a free-masonry of which hats and ties and harmonious note-books are the visible signs: there is no inequality, no barrier, between the genius and the numskull, for the laziest loon among us may dance on to an equality with the First Class men if he have a toe but sufficiently fantastical; while even freshmen feel no bashful fear of the city of the Cam though they stand in the shadow of the grave and august Senate House, for in their ears is ringing the merry chuckle of the neighbouring Hill. And so it is that, socks and tattered gowns, flat hills and narrow streets, call them what you will, we love these cranks of Cambridge.



### III.

#### THE IDLE RIVER.

EVEN a wry-mouthed day will dimple at the wooing of a river, and ours was a day born for pleasure, the whole earth was singing with light ; the sun had set the flowers ablaze and trembling grasshoppers were shouting in fear for the firemen. The playful heavens hurled flowerets of blue to the earth, and through their gift floated our buoyant canoe. Gratifying our every whim, it swung us where may weighed the boughs to the water, and sweet heavy perfumes to the crew ; and now it flashed into the brilliance and sparkle of sunshine where we lay revelling in the shimmering glory of the day. It is easy to be happy on a river, for it heaves up your every burden upon its shoulder, and you drift into happiness, drift just wherever the whimsical fellow pleases, into the reeds or into the sun, into speech, into song, into sleep, into the bank with a bump. The murmuring waters

drown clattering care. "Ophidean murmurs," will the bustling growl. But heed them not, for timely idlesse is the amulet guarding for you reverend years. Wear it, lest you whisk, transformed, into the world's great bane, the self-important bustler whose work has a Billingsgate voice.

Down leapt the bank to the river, and idly we gazed over the levels of Cambridgeshire, wavy meadows and chattering trees. Idly we dreamed, as the philandering river went wooing the rushes and won from them shadows. Idly we were playing with the lapping water when the bank sprang up and waved a leafy mane, and we knew the world as the tips of wheat-ears, and buttercups riding, riding, to the sun.

On these long days beneath the open sky the mind is adrift, as well as the body, for it is set floating at random by field and breeze and shadow; a cloud swings it into the sunlight of some half-remembered poem, then it drifts away, through willow-herb and barley, to some notion leagues removed from river banks. Seemingly the whole day flutters idly by. But it will be ever possible to number at eventide memories which, vague and dim under the dawn, have become as sharp-edged as the willow leaves, hanging black in the heart of the sun. We do but flitter over memories won from our world of field and book and town, with a mere swallow touch for every

well-beloved as we drift over the scented river. Yet our hazy remembrance of happy things flown has been bathed, day-long, in the strength of the sunlight and in the life-giving beauty of the stream, and has thereby found rejuvenation.

Absurd ripples tripped upon each other's heels and popped into rat-holes ; and a fish, rising to the surface, splashed into being a wheel of fairy circles, spinning one within the other, until the final rim broke upon flower-promised lily leaves.

Memories are ripple natured, and unceasingly they ring one into the other, ever widening as they go, until, though every hoop is true issue of its fore-runner, the last ripple appears a pale stranger to the first. A lusty Harrovian song adjures us to follow up our random memories, but I hold there is scant need to spur on the pursuit. For reminiscences are the most importunate beggars, ever hammering at our gates. An you are a huntsman, well you know how a chance word swells to a whoop and "tallyho" ! So you be a fisherman, a fluttering fly can cast you back to your days of tight lines. Or are there honoured books upon your wall ? Then what a stirring pebble is a quotation ! Pitched into memory's midst, it sets whole hours and volumes in commotion, and there shall be no rest for the troubled waters until every old friend has been greeted.

Lazy and silent had we been all day, but as the

cool of evening stole over the river, even we awoke, and rippled through heroes and heroines almost as many as the buttercups, which now, with a last golden wink, were slipping into the shadows.

For we were plunged into Meredithian waters by the quoting bows, and "Phoebus with Admetus" turned the stream to gold. Then with Borrow we rounded the willowy bend, and with happy in consequence turned into "Songs of Travel." Lytton and may-trees we quitted for gently monotonous rushes and Trollope; and above the home bend we took Thackeray and a snag, which proved as pertinacious as the "Old Campaigner." For some angry moments we rocked aground, and then drifted over the heavily perfumed waters of *Paradise* where flowering grasses waved to the Victorian ladies.

Now the dusk stole in, and silently we drifted by willows that stood with trunks apart and with plumy heads as one, over waters that murmured "Hush." Silvery snakes slipped from our paddles and curled themselves into dreamy coils. The meditative stream lulled the reeds to rest; energy, hurry, were things of a dream; towns, bustle, snapping speech, surely were sham. The crooning river and the gliding canoe, and the pondering life, these alone could be real.

Then the river crept by silent colleges and under wide-boughed trees. Bridges, flinging athwart the

stream, striped the grey with black. One by one dropped the lights of John's and Trinity upon the water, slow, preluding notes to the song of the world. We were under the bridge and in the glare of the street. A wagon rattled on the paved stone-way, boys were whistling on the quay, and women, with arms rolled in aprons, stood in knots and talked shrilly of pot and child. And the river, idle no longer, was bearing upon broader waters its burden of wharf and barge.

## IV.

### READING PARTIES.

If you will ask a sleepy son of Cambridge what he means by a reading party, he will sigh of an English farm in a corner of our lovable land ; he will murmur to you of the flower-bathed air, and of the country loaf broken under the young green of Spring. Or he will tell you that it means windy levels with canals and little walled towns and mediaeval spires ; or poplared country with sunburnt peasants and sabots and simple hearted *curés*.

This is what he remembers now. That heavy book-box, a sight of which sets his mind aching ; that hair-rending first morning of work when he suddenly realised his ignorance, and, in a cold sweat, lifted up his voice and cursed his idle terms ; these things have faded from his mind. The real things of a reading party are those foreign towns, fragrant with the mediaeval days which still slumber in the narrow

streets and cling to the heights of the clock tower and the rich sculpture of churches, towns to which we come as strangers and which we left as friends. For we had rambled in the streets until we knew by heart those peaked roofs, and the houses with their gables and green shutters ; and we knew the gargoyles on the churches, and the closest bargainers in the market-place, and the wash of the river and the tone of the chimes. These things are still vividly living.

Real, too, are those jolly farmhouses with floors of doubtful sobriety, and real are the flowers crowning the grass of spinneys where red buds were glimmering to green, and the keen appetites which demolished the homely fare when we trooped in from a day in the woods or a swinging walk over blowing downs. And real to every reading party, whether at home or abroad, were the evening hours when we threshed out our notions of life and art and poetry.

In the Easter vacation, when the tripos is within "view halloo," reading parties are most numerous. With a trust in human industry which is really pathetic, we pack our book-boxes, and travel to a flowered valley or to some historic town. Or perhaps we are thoughtful of health ; then we go to a bracing coast or a hillside farm, where the mocking year pelts us with snow and hail.

In the foolish wisdom of our youth we held our

first reading party upon a salubrious hill-top, in an old farmhouse. Wise hayricks snuggled under the protection of a row of fir trees, but the house stood exposed to every wind that raced across the common. Our chimney-place was of a generous breadth, but a small modern grate gave little comfort in that bitter weather, and we shivered as we worked, wrapped in our travelling rugs upon the hearth. The wind howled through the bare trees, it rattled every window, door, and bedstead in the house ; it whistled in the keyholes ; it leapt down the chimney, shivering and a-cold, and kept us company upon the hearth ; it curled within our very beds, a well-grown draught. But there were woods creeping into leaf, and white violets in sheltered corners, and the wonderful blue haze of Surrey drooped over the hills.

In Brussels we had our second reading party which means for me now the great golden square with its magnificent buildings, the glass in the west windows of the cathedral, blue, ochre, ruddy gold ; Meunier's groups, breathing in bronze the pathos, toil and simple happiness of Millet's pictures. And it means rides upon the front board of electric cars, round the city in the star-lit evenings. The pace on the down slopes sent the air singing past out ears, and turned the fondling of a spring night to an icy grip.

That same year we had a reading party in Bruges,

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town of narrow canals, massive gateways, and disreputable Britons. It is a town with which you may live intimately. For in one afternoon you can make the round of its walls; you can touch the open country with its canals, and windmills, and heavy barges. Then, passing through a frowning gate, honourably scarred in defence of the city, you shall come upon *Notre Dame*, rich in its pictures and Angelo's marble Madonna.

But a pace further is the cathedral where, beneath the dark vaulting, borne aloft by fluted pillars, stand images of the Virgin and the saints, life-size, brilliantly coloured, star-spangled figures, beating upon the eye in a glare of wax offerings. On you still may go, across the market-place, through those beguiling vendors, to the beauty of Memling's pictures, where time and the world are lost. And when the dusk draws in, the square calls you a greeting, the square with the palace of justice and townhall, and the *Chapelle du Saint Sang*, which tells, in the wealth of carved flowers and sculptured windows and leafy pinnacles, of the days when a thriving Bruges was the mart of the world. Then the full tune, which the chimes of the belfry play, sings the hour of the evening meal, and you pass home through the old quaint streets, which ever are bridging canals.

Twice a week the vendors of the "Rag market" spread their goods under the trees of a boulevard,

and here we would spend a morning chaffering, amidst old and grimy men who saw in us purchasers of rusty keys, old teeth, and broken combs. Or a woman of greater girth than charity, would summon us to look at enamelled cups and ugly basins, blandly demanding an extortionate price. But a copper-coloured patch, further down the boulevard, would speak to us of cauldrons and candlesticks, and there for us lay the serious bargaining of the day. At first we were ashamed of haggling, but the ransoms which we paid for spurious articles sharply taught us to know bargaining as a game and the lavish purchaser as an idle loon, lacking the spirit of the sport. Then we, too, held kettles to the light and peered for cracks, marking down the veriest pin-holes, and we sharpened our wits over cauldrons. Bargaining is not merely an entertaining, but a human game. It demands a flock of nice affectations, the assumption of indifference, and a counterfeit air of interest but suddenly aroused ; it requires a quick perception of moods and a knowledge of the value of lines and wrinkles around mouth and eyes and nose. Meantime you have the satisfaction of knowing that, while you amuse yourself, there is not the slightest fear of your profiting by another's loss !

There was one icily cold morning when sleet lashed the "Rag market," and vendors hugged themselves in dingy cloaks and orange-coloured blankets,

while we made a damp round of kettles and candlesticks, beating a hurried retreat to a neighbouring archway in the sharpest squalls. When I am feeling honest, I admit that the weather must have worked in our favour ; at other times I maintain that our wonderful success was due to the skill we had acquired through constant bargaining. At the dinner hour, we stood in the "Rag market" utterly drenched, but with more goods than we could possibly carry. We must have caused the Belgians some amusement as we staggered home. We were wet, cold, dishevelled, and beaming. Brass pans hung from every finger, coffee-pots clanked inside the cauldrons on our arms, and candlesticks peered out of noisy kettles. Bent double by the ferocity of the wind and lashing sleet, we reeled along, to the barbaric music of clattering metal. In some such battered style, I imagine, the old heroes marched triumphantly home.

Trophies of some sort every reading party must produce upon its return to Cambridge. For these are its vouchers to real, hard work. So copper kettles we bear from Bruges, pottery answers for our industry at Bayeux, wood-carvings denote strenuous reading in the Black Forest or beside the Rhine ; Brittany signifies its approbation in green jugs, and in bowls, decorated with cocks and peasants ; while Paris testifies to our studious hours in models of the

gargoyles of *Notre Dame*. Every reading party, you will find, has some such certificate of its labours.

And these things may serve, too, as a jogging elbow, to prod the memory of our coming years ; they shall fling the scattered back into that together which made all places lovable, and bring to us in clear, firm line, quaint towns and happy farmsteads, and those great days of comradeship.

## V.

### THE TRIPOS POND.

WARNINGS are the body-snatchers in the world of ethics. They burrow in the tombs of the oldest sinners of Romance and History, they desecrate the graves of white-haired faults and wrinkled expiations. They are of an immoral nature, their *raison d'être* being to aid us to take advantage of the misfortunes and disgrace of others. Rank upon rank, our victims are placed before us and the warnings cry as they smack smug lips, "Profit by whichever wretch best suits your case : such our munificence !" Especially generous are they to youth, and indeed their jubilee performance is given in the nursery. Here they rub their hands in unctuous delight at the display of corpses harried out from all the corners of the world. What a butchery is there ! For my sake only, an innumerable number of boys and girls were slaughtered by my nurses down the

stairs and in the fire, while the warnings rattled a grim accompaniment upon the bones of the children who had wringing wet feet. Freely these warnings throw the grave's disgorgement to us, and we tramp to knowledge of good and evil over the mangled relics which they strew along our way. Surely a strange triumphal march towards the goal of virtue and discretion !

Yet, the world through, warnings hold their sway, and even here in Cambridge are they lusty and strong. In the ears of idle freshmen many are the warnings murmured of those who, in their examinations, met with failure. Murmured, for the British are a people of few words and such as they do use must be of a brave nature. We love not to hear knelled the gloomy syllables of "defeat," "disaster." "Failure," too, is amongst the number of the eschewed, we speak little of failure. If it become palpable, very handy are we with the sods. So our seniors whispered to us of ploughshares, and of the Tripos pond, and the beckoning finger, and the plunge heard in the calm of night, and the no more seen. But we laughed, for the Tripos examination was still far away, and the pond is a pleasant enough place ; its waters reflect the bowed heads of willows and the cheery red stems of dogwood, which grows on an island in the heart of the water. Great clusters of reeds and flags fringe the banks, while in the dawn

of the leafy year, the pond is wrapped in the happy mystery the secret of which only Corot and the willows know.

So we laughed. Then one evening we suddenly felt a desire to visit the pond. This is an account of what occurred.

It was on a dark October night that we went through the archway into a miserable drizzle. A lamp flung a bright gleam on to the path for some little way, and beyond all was the blacker for the brief illumination.

Branches met overhead, and boughs groped across the path. They clung to us like human things, begging us not to go on, or perhaps pleading with us not to leave them there, alone, in the awful solitude of night. But our ears were deaf to their cries, and only our backbones answered. Heart-sick, the wind moaned in the trees, it shivered beside us for the sake of our human comfort.

And now we came to a path girt with shrubs, impenetrable as a prison wall. It was narrow, and as we stepped we brushed against the bushes on either side. At first there was no sound save the swishing of leaves. Then our footfalls, which had hitherto been inaudible, cut the night air with the scream of gravel. And suddenly they were crunching ahead of us, and now dropped many yards behind. A twig snapped nervously, and fell, and half a dozen

## VI.

### WIND BEFORE RAIN.

WINDS are never so happy as when at the gallop over the fen country and the Great Level of Cambridgeshire. Hills are imperturbable, and they irk the wind with their proud indifference ; even half a gale is faced with scorn. Such treatment raises the very devil in a wind. It rages down the valley in a mood of wreckage, hurls rocks into ravines, and drags at tree roots. It roars aloud in its fury and loosens terror upon the world, until, childlike, the clouds take fright at their own shadows on the mountains, and race from the foe at their heels. It throws itself against a headland, and flings back upon the sea in baffled fury, and this you will very well know if you have ever sailed beneath a point when the gales are astir. But in a flat land there are no obstacles to whip the wind's exuberance to fury, and there is a plenitude of space for a thousand wild gambols, breadth of land in which to swirl, length in which to race.

In Cambridgeshire of all flat lands, the wind drops malice and is all jollity and exuberance, hearty

and strong, and graced with a thousand fancies. Wind has in it nothing bovine, and though we speak of gentle breezes, no real wind was ever calm of soul. But the winds of this country have caught, as do all who pass through it, a tithe of the happy-hearted temperament of Cambridgeshire, the peaceful smile of England.

When the wind backs against the sun, bad weather follows. So rain there will be to-morrow, but all is dry to-day. Down the road the wind gallops, sending up the dust into the eyes of wayfarers and flicking red earth into the furrows, while a thousand hobgoblin-puffs kick their heels for joy to see this tampering with the work of man.

It sends the clouds flying to throw heavy shadows at field and orchard. And the trees shake with laughter at the scandals which it tells as it whisks through their branches.

Then a cheeky gust puffs at a spider's web in the hawthorn, sends its consequential builder swinging, and capers off chuckling at his curses.

Life is well worth living when the wind blows your legs away and you ride upon his shoulder ! Best of comrades is he, rough, boisterous, but frank, and liberal in spirit. He is the progressive spirit of the world, sweeping away cobwebs and prejudice, and setting the dust shivering in fear.

How the wind delights in blowing gaps through

the hedges, marring the work of painful labour ! For in this country we trim our hedges and cover up the bald places with the clippings. It may be that these will grow into budding hawthorn trees, but meanwhile the hedge is both more presentable and stouter.

Through such a hedge spurts the wind in unexpected puffs, and a man coming down the road with bent head, jams his hat over his eyes. How the wind swings his coat-tails out behind him, and lashes him with his own broadcloth ! The foolish fellow shivers. What wind would be aught but nipping when greeted thus boorishly ? A wind should be faced frankly, with head flung up, for it suits his humour to be met with those long, bragging, breaths which mockingly threaten to drain him of his strength, and swallow him, every limb. He loves an honourable wrestle, so boldly buffet him up the road ! That head down business, that butting below the belt, is enough to try the patience of a balmy breeze ! So the wind boos at this battle-shirker, kicks his hat into a puddle, and swings off shrilling with delight. Now he ties knots in the grass as children do in handkerchiefs, that the fields may remember what a jolly day they have had. For it will be wet to-morrow, and this is so busy a world that everything is out of breath with hurry, and it is hard to remember not to forget.

How the wind frisks in that meadow, whirls a waltz in the brown grass, and freakishly tweaks the tails of milch kine ! They run together underneath the hedge. He is no ditch-dweller, not he ! Thus he shouts as he rushes from them to the hillside.

He ramps over fields ; swirls in the clouds, and then down to earth with yet another troop of breeze-boys. Hand in hand they spin into the farmyard, tousle haystacks, ruffle touchy turkeys, nip the farmer ! How the decorous duck-pond gasps and shudders as they cut their capers on her waters !

Now the wind has reached the hill where tall trees whisper, and the awe and calm of woods check his wildness. And he steals down the hillside as a bashful boy, shy of earth and her daughters ; and sets the bluebells tinkling with his breath, and the birches quivering with love for his beauty. And he leaves his heart behind him, but he must on. So he leaps over the valley and is soon as mad as ever.

What a devil's orchestra this wind is ! How it howls and whistles, rattles out a shake, and clashes discords ! Now on earth it dins us with its clatter, now the deafened clouds stop ears and hurry from it.

But to-morrow, in the early hours, the birds will revel in the lull that follows a gale. And when I wake, the rain will have wrapped the country in grey mist and the elms will be dripping dismally.

## VII.

### TEXT-BOOKS: A STUDY OF CAMBRIDGE IN THE MAY TERM.

THE hurry of our lives has peopled the world with a race of cripples. So many unimportant things have we to do and dully dream of, that mind and character lack sturdy legs: limbs have no time to grow, and men rely on artificial props. Clinging to red tape and clutching at blue envelopes, they hobble through their business with the aid of systems; or upon the arm of brandy they stumble along life's way. Others fling their misfortune and their rainfall upon the shoulders of their unfortunate gods; while the crutch of many is a brew of tea that has won strength and solidity by simmering a morning through upon the hob. A row of bottles, reeking of bathchairs, drugs, and the interesting bedside consultations, is a horse-hair bolster, a wiry stiff prop, supporting the limpest. Very common, too, are the cripples who, limping along, rely upon traditions, proverbs, customs,

the cheap "fit-me-downs" and "ready-mades" of morals and of manners.

Of all places in the world you would expect sound limbs in Cambridge, the haunt of youth. Yet in this May term, crutches are tapping upon every pavement. For whenever an examination makes its arrival, with shrewish eyes peering into every cranny for an unremembered date, roving restlessly steely sharp, into each corner for a forgotten derivation, text-books will be found upon the strut. Boats, bats, tennis-rackets, call in vain, for the final examination has set its gloomy seal upon the term. Out from every doorway troop the un-degreed, and, bartering their young limbs for higher place in class-lists, they give these long and sunny hours to learn the art of hobbling.

Text-books are the worst and noisiest of crutches, for you cannot escape even those of a stranger. They protrude themselves from his pocket and yelp at you as you pass their owner by in all the innocence of silence. Weazel-like, they hang upon the throat of joy, while all true love of books pales and chokes in the text-book-clutch. They oust racket and bat and leisurely discourse, and the bubbling of the tea-kettle is hushed in their presence. They monopolize the sunny window-seat which once knew an ever accessible friend, and they are to be found even on the river, desecrating with their mean faces this flowering season of the year and the great blue days.

To drop a leg is one of the easiest things in the world. Your crutch chosen, but a week of hugging it is needed ere you become as thoroughly a hopper as the best of the one-legged crew. Already a crowd of lusty young men and women have trained themselves to a fairly skilful use of their crutches. One glance down the street will show you a hundred of those who have taken a text-book for prop. That bustling pace and anxious eye proclaim the cripple. Daily they grow more dependent upon their text-books. They look at their work through its eyes alone. They gaze at the world from over its shoulder ; if for their health's sake they walk, trees are to them as hazy diagrams, and the road is a parallel line without its mate. Every meadow is a battle-field, and feverishly they search it out a date and a decency of skulls. Or they row; then their strokes are the pulsing of hearts and their stream is the vein of a dog, while in its waters are bobbing heads which they strive to bisect with their oars. They sleep : their closed eyelids are the pages of books from which ill-paired and senseless phrases are glaring, and in the dark blank of the room, ghastly letters jig together insanely, leap into lurid words, then fling apart, evading capture. And through the silence of the night, facts scream to the brain. Then the heavy-eyed morning flops in, and the limping return to their task.

When the examination with its death's-head leer has sunk into oblivion, will these acolytes of hobble-

hood fling aside their props and step out boldly, or will they forever live the text-book life, and palefaced here, limp through the world pale-charactered ?

There is a fear that hands trained to the use of one crutch may tingle for a grip upon some other. These Cambridge cripples, perhaps, will join the ranks of the one-legged creatures who, the world through, hang upon the arms of text-books compounded of their grandad's saws and their own customary modes of life. This sort of man shuffles in youth unthinkingly into his beliefs and rules of conduct, and in middle life he deems it a matter for congratulation if he can say that he is acting as he has always done. He is a man who lives by rote, a text-book man ; he is the world's conventional, beef-on-Sunday, change detesting cat-like man, who has found his religion, his politics, his acquaintances, and his conversation, in his well-thumbed text-book. Within it he sits, dead-alive, firmly wedged between the coffin-natured covers over which he cannot see a right good hindrance to the progress of the world. The devil is open to conviction and may even serve as a stepping-stone to *Utopia* ; not so my cripple, worthily wrong and wrongly right from head to toe ; eel-like, slipping through censorious fingers back to his slough of well-intentioned worthlessness.

I intend each year to make a bonfire of all my text-books and any sprouts of wooden-legs and

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crutches that may be shooting up, lest they should grow into my funeral pyre, and send me out into the world a pale ghost, flitting through a limping life. For I know them all, the rascals, for what they really are: wolves in sheep's clothing, bleating melodiously to me of sure degrees, duty, respectability, and ease, while they lure me on to death; body-snatchers, draped in cloaks of conventional conduct, who prowl through those melancholy grave-yards wherein we bury our mistakes, ready to rob the less brawny among us of our independence and self-reliance. The atmosphere of their presence is as suffocating as the woolliest of blankets; flee them all if you would win a breath of windy soul.

## VIII.

### “TRAY.”

As a nation we are irresponsive to our past, and blunted to the historic spirit. Upon our greater number the atmosphere of a place has but scanty influence ; the Dane ancestor does not speak within us as we pass St Olaf's church, and not many of our legs change from a Teutonic to a Latin motion as we leave the by-way for the old Roman road. So have Macadam and civilization blotted out our past.

This is heavily deplorable, for our lack of the historic spirit proves us to be men of little minds. For he who has no reverence for by-gone ages is a dwarfish man indeed, not a giant pioneer, as he imagines, wielding a progressive axe through obstructive tree trunks. He could be a sound worker, well in the strength of the onward current, and withal be the miniature of the past. Indeed, a great man is the past and the present, and a few inches of the future ; but a few inches only, for no one is sufficiently untrammelled by his age and surroundings as to tower up to a view of aught but a narrow

country. As for the man who does not ring true to the past, and who cannot feel the Norman and the Roman in him when he goes their way, he is too stunted and undeveloped to do any good work. He is a half-fledged man, a pollard being, spiritually hovel-housed. He has not fulfilled himself, and should be debarred from Parliament and all other great things.

A people who has no respect for its past will be addicted to Vandalism. Thus it is that you find the names of billy-cocked men carved upon grave monuments, and gaping bottles on a battle-field. It would be better if the nation would wholly ignore the relics of sped ages, rather than dishonour them by sweltering in multitudes around some reverend ruin, whose chancel is but one item in a day in which a ham-sandwich is another. Few true pilgrimages are made now-a-days, and instead men "do the sights." Doing is the seeing of things with one eye blinded by cheap curiosity, and the other bunged up with a desire to be even with the guide-book. It is not an entralling occupation, and thus it is that the younger "doers" work wreckage on the "sights," as an outlet for their spirits.

In the gracious atmosphere of Cambridge, we do not expect that Vandalism and disregard for ancient institutions which centred in a movement for the abolition of "Tray."

“Tray” is a mystery unknown to the world but dear to all true Girtonians. It is a word to conjure with in foreign lands, an “open sesame” to the hardened heart. What his mistletoe was to the Druid, and his *penates* to the Roman, such is “Tray” to the Girtonian.

To the eye of the materialist, it is a black enamelled tray supporting a roll on a white plate, with knife athwart it. Beside the plate is a cup with pale blue rim, standing in a saucer of a dark blue floral design. There is also a saucepan filled with milk, and a tiny saucer which might have come out of a doll’s tea-set.

“What an absurd affair,” you mutter.

But little you know of the everlasting wonder that hovers round a “tray”! Who can tell what eerie being placed it in your room unbeknown to you? Some Pan-like creature, surely, bringing to mortals much good, leavened with a spice of evil. This is the polite way of writing what is said when, groping for matches, you overturn the saucepan. For “trays” have a habit of taking the airiest perches upon chair-arms, and of camping in the most unexpected quarters on the floor.

Not only does the “tray” come to you in mystery, but it has a soul unfathomable. The flames wherein it was molten knew changes not so strange nor spirit so ardent and alive. At nine o’clock, or later in

Bohemian circles, the tray is borne upon an arm to some neighbour's rooms ; and though wonderment seems far removed from the munching of this customary and simple meal, nightly our "trays" reduce us to amazement.

For at times the heart of the tray is filled with gentle melody, and it pours forth a serenade beneath the stars and your loved one's window. Yet again it is as one possessed, and thrums a rough reveille to the sluggard roosters in the farmyard, or leaps the stairway in corybantic clamour. But ever and always, it is a friend and companion to her who reads its heart aright, and loves it. Swifter than swallow, it guides her down the spiral as a fleet toboggan ; it is to her a breast-plate in times of danger ; it is a guardian angel, hovering over head when lintels threaten peril ; it is a harp, a drum, a throbbing timbrel, and sings a march or wake to suit her ear's mood. Upon it, as upon an altar of old, she breaks the bread of friendship, when the firelight flickers on a sleepy clock-face and converse is as fitful and as golden as the flames. The epitome of constancy, its black honest face shines lovingly upon her when her mind is weary and her temper crossed, for it alone of all her friends can ever understand her.

Such is the tray which was threatened with destruction, and in whose fall would saucepan, cup, and plate, have been involved. So would we have been

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the poorer ; for the saucepan has many uses, chiefly harmonic, whether as a bubbling accompaniment to conversation, or as a baton when more consequential music is demanded. And who can tell of the healths that are pledged, or of the sorrows washed away, in that cup of cocoa ?

As to the tiny saucer, it is of no service whatever. The butter which it carries would be as fair and round a pat if upon the plate beside the roll. But there could be no true “tray” without it. It is the spiritual corner-stone of “trays.” Surely the Junior Bursar who invented this delicious piece of inutility was an adept in the art of living ! Well she knew that the dearest possessions of life, more especially to utilitarians as myself, are the objects most deficient in utility. Those things which are at the very antipodes of the German *practische* hold a magic charm for all hearts, they are as rain to parched earth, the smiles of life. And so our Junior Bursar gave us this pigmy saucer, this youngest of plates wrapped in the glamour of dawn, a plate in arms, the veriest dimple of a plate. Let all wise women who succeed her, maintain the saucer, and not sink to economies in the very soul of “trays” !

If you consider all this a pother about a very small matter, turn back to the beginning, and read your own name into the story of a graceless nation.

and the scent of bean-flowers drifts over the garden plot and in through open windows.

Two villeins, three borderers, and eight cottars, says the Book, dwelt upon the land of Picot; now all who dwell here are free men, meet to be courted by their rulers, but the intervening centuries have juggled no wondrous change in the number of Girton's families. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the village sped forward at a run. For agriculture then became a fashion and statesmen studied ditches and caressed the cheeks of turnips. A cottage, with windows askew, shows "1755" black upon its white-washed wall, and two or three proud old wives will tell you that their cottages date from the palmy days of agriculture, and "have been in the family" for thrice fifty years. The rise of fruit-farms gave a second fillip to the village. Sourly the plough-land looks upon these *novi homines* who have started up only when scurvy ceased to be a manifestation of divine omnipotence. Notwithstanding scowls, plum and cherry trees pluckily ripen their fruit, inspirited by the fragrance of sweet-peas royally crimson and purple, blazing in long procession through these Cambridgeshire gardens until the plebeian day arrive to trundle them to market.

That staunch conservative, the plough-land, may look his surest, but wheedling change slips a hand through Girton's arm, and leads him onward, if but

gently. Twelve o'clock strikes, and the scarlet overalls of fluffy-haired maidens flash defiance to a stand-still world. Shouting, the boys tumble from the school-house, boldly heedless of the toes of gouty custom. Surely here is a troop strong and lusty enough to kick the world along !

A mid-day game of marbles breaks the monotony of time-tables and spelling-books, and all down the path heavy boot heels are boring, kicking, screwing, the earth into holes. Then the rival players pace their distances and, standing upright, fling their marbles to the base. Skill is greeted with a grin on face of rival, failure is saved from disaster by a high, black paling which scornfully rebuts the ill-aimed marbles. So do these irreverent urchins trample custom, for marbles used to be a game of rolling balls and crouching players.

Let not conservatives fluster ! The village is not yet in pursuit of time. Some new-fangled methods may come slinking in, but the good old ways are still of round and portly girth, and even the youngest boys maintain the well-worn predominance of Adam, and will have no girl as partner in their games. I fancy that for many a year to come there will be refuge in Girton from the bustle of the world. There go when the hours have stung you in their onward pelting, and find a seat upon a low stone wall, that you may insolently swing your heels while you jeer

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at Time. Leaves climb into the blue and drop, red to the red plough-land, as sternly the years' custodian bids the world spin on. Brown fields flush green, swell to golden glory, and humble themselves to the need of man. Golden hair pales to snow-white locks, and those who were romps are tottering ancients, while names once carved upon the new year's saplings are now black lettered, cut in stone. But Girton stands there with his hands in his pockets, gazing.

## X.

### THE LITTLE ROMAN.

THE Roman road runs from Cambridge in a bee-line to Huntingdon. Two miles from the town, on the right of the road, lie the grounds of Girton College. Workmen, digging the foundations of the building, struck their spades upon metal, and disclosed a Roman burial ground. In our library now rest the relics of those road builders of centuries ago, the builders of Empire, and of mankind, clipped from the shaggy life. In a glass case lie heavy vases, earthenware bowls and jars, ladies' hairpins, warriors' brooches, children's bangles. With dumb eyes, they pathetically strive to tell the tale of a great people to whom they were the objects of simple and daily use.

There is a little bracelet, a child's. She was the daughter of an old soldier. Maimed in the frontier wars of Rome, he was among those sent out to the

new lands of Britain. With his wife, he settled as a colonist in Cambridge, and, late in life, came to them there a little daughter. The woman, in her dawning motherhood, smiled into the blue heavens of the gods, who had at length granted her reiterated prayer. But she never knew the happy mother's love. For from the first the little Cornelia was crippled, and a love fierce to cruelty drove joyful content from their hearth. Sorrow sat in the father's eyes, and the pain of love gripped at the mother's throat until she feared to breathe. Yet the little Cornelia struggled bravely through her babyhood. Though her body was crooked and her feet malformed, the pale face under its golden hair was wonderfully beautiful, and her arms in movement were as the rippling of tiny waves on the sunny shore. Curves played over her bending wrists and broke upon a dimple, and her dainty hand was as delicately pretty as a fair shell, humming to the sea. With big clumsy fingers, brown with the touch of the soil, her father, on her seventh birthday, clasped a bracelet upon the slender wrist, and bound it with his kiss upon her hand.

It was ever Cornelia's prayer, that she might play with the other children. But her mother feared their hearty roughness for her limping child, and kept the little maiden to her side. Her father whittled quaint toys for her through the winter

evenings, and in summer-time he never returned from his toil in the fields but he bore with him a flower for Cornelia, a spray of honeysuckle or a wild pink rose. For the child loved flowers. She would cockle her nose in ecstatic delight over the scent of the rose, and an hour through she would sit listening, with bent head, to the tinkling of hair-bells in her ear. And when her mother had denied her constant prayer, "I would play with the other children," she would turn for solace to the flowers. She kissed their petals and laid to her own cheek theirs. She called them by the names of the playing children ; the honey-flower was Lucretia who smiled to Cornelia in the market-place, and the foxglove was Brutius the dark-eyed, who flung up his head and looked fierce, like a soldier. So Cornelia played with the flowers and loved the children. In the evening she would sit in the doorway beside her father, in the low chair he had made for her. This was her happy hour, the glad time when she most nearly was a child at play.

Down the road galloped the boys ; they were war-horses, neighing in their strength and pride, proudly rearing under the whip of their charioteers. They played at war, and with kings they fought the battles of Rome. Then the conquerors marched in procession around the hill. They were singing ; they wore flowers in their hair.

Triumph shone in Cornelia's eyes. She would look quickly to father or mother. The stern lines in the man's face softened to love beneath his daughter's glance ; he caressed her hand. The woman knew, through the light of her mother-love, of some need to her daughter ; she murmured of the evening chill, and wrapped the soft homespun round the child ; or she asked her darling if the pain were angry to-night. He, the soldier, the adventurer, the lover of danger and daring, whose first bride had been peril, had lost through the hardening years, the power to see in the child's mute appeal the re-birth of his own passionate longings for the world of adventure and action. And the mother, who watched over the little one with tender and ever wakeful love, believing herself to forestall the child's every desire, had not the knowledge to understand the warrior spirit in the frail body. So Cornelia lived between them, wrapped in their love, near them, yet not of their world ; fluttering through their life, a ghost-child. They tended her body, but the true Cornelia was far away from that little misshapen form of hers. She lived in the real world, the active world, with the children who played before her door. Yet to them she was a little pale face peering at them, a ghost-child in the shadows.

One day Cornelia evaded her mother and limped along the road, down towards the river. At the

ford, boys and girls were playing ; they were mariners lading their heavy galleys with wine and corn for a distant voyage, splashing gleefully in the water as they sang a wild brave song of the sea. They were sailing through mad winds and over rough and frothy waves. Up sprang islands, blue and green, and the great ships dropped their sails and shot into the smooth water of a bay. Then the crew ran waist-deep into the sparkling water and flung up handfuls of pearls ; or they lay upon the nursing sands and sang old tales of strife and war. Then the captain, the old hero, called, and the oars shattered the waves as the ship drove its way through the emerald sea.

Cornelia stood by the river, and watched them wistfully. Then they called to her to come.

A child with new eyes and a new laugh was snatched by her mother from a day of glorious life.

“ Ah, I would play with the other children,” cried Cornelia, turning to her mother a petal-face flushed with the bravery of the sea and the triumph of life. Fiercely the woman clutched the child to her breast.

There were days of anxious watching by Cornelia’s couch, for the father and mother. He would lay a flower by her cheek upon the pillow, and the warrior’s child would lift to him eyes grateful and brave, though the pain forced tears to them. The mother wrestled a night through with the tormenting

pain, and won a little rest for her child. Then Cornelia dreamily murmured of her one day of life, of ships and the wild sea, and of her hero-comrades, and the lands she had won. She broke her mother's heart with her childish babble, for the woman saw only the winning of death.

They buried Cornelia with the flowers and the bracelet that she loved.

The father and mother sat of an evening in the door-way, hand locked in hand, staring silently over the levels into the black sky of the loving night. When their neighbours laid them in the earth, there was no one to remember Cornelia, the ghost-child.

Was that the end of Cornelia's story? I do not know. Centuries later her bracelet was found in the earth and now it lies in our library. And she?

In the stillness of night we stole through the dark tunnel of a corridor, homewards from the visiting of friends. It was that hour of night when all things are oppressively silent, when they strive and strain to be still. Darkness blotted out the archways and hung, a heavy pall, upon the blurred hazy passage which our candle cleft for us through the shadows. Every room was mute and the college was muffled in a death-like hush. Our murmuring voices were suffocated in the noiseless night, and we moved with limbs reluctant, paralyzed, stiff, holding, as it were, their breath, through a world where every-

thing was listening. We made no sound, not a board creaked beneath our feet ; but the terror of sound, that clings to the corpse of night, flung us into a cold sweat.

A ray of light filtered through a door-chink of a room where a late worker sat. But it was a mere smudge of yellow, lacking all friendliness. It bade us be quieter still, it was a cold, clammy, hand setting a hush upon our lips.

There was a shuffle on the window pane, a tap. My companion murmured of the scratching of the ivy ; I nodded. There was a starry sky, and, challenging silence, I flung up the window sash and leant into the night air, drawing in great breaths of its dewy fragrance. Stars glittered in the trees, confusing heaven and earth ; and the black of night, the black that is full of warmth and colour, made of the clouds and fields and trees one billowy whole. I drew in my head, and noticed that no ivy grew upon the wall.

Arm in arm, we stole on down the corridor. Through the open window the night breeze filtered, and we were followed by a gentle draught. It swayed and pulled at the folds of our gowns ; it sighed. With cool fingers it touched our hands.

We reached a room where they held high revelry. The door was no barrier to the voices and laughter of those within, while through the open ventilator

shot a cheerful beam of light and the sound of song. There could be no mistaking that here was a merry party enjoying to the full the glory of youth. These human sounds seemed to lift a weight from us, and we lingered at the door. Coming from the depths of silence upon these signs of vivid life, we felt forlorn, pale, and unreal. We had a wistful longing for the companionship of the merry-makers.

Through a window, heavily draped in clematis and roses, starlight glimmered, and lay, a pale streak, upon the walls. The leaves of the rambling plants dappled the fainting light with shadows. It was as though sad and gentle eyes gazed at the doorway from a pale and wistful face, pressed against the wall.

We passed on. Pulling open, a few paces further, a heavy fire-proof door, we went through, and closed it noiselessly behind us. Every window was fastened in this stretch of corridor, and the stuffy atmosphere oppressed us. Turning back the one step to the nearest window, we saw the door behind us open, hang for a moment upon a hesitating hinge, and close. I muttered that some one must need a light home, and my companion stepped to the door and held it open. For a second she stood motionless, peering into the darkness, waiting for the dissipated and groping wanderer, and I heard some one running with a light but uneven step.

"There is no one," she whispered, closing the door.

A guttering candle bade us hurry home. The window was forgotten, unopen, yet the air was cool. It was stirred by some draught that lay ever ahead of us, sighing wearifully in the cracks of doors, never touching our garments with its breath. Of a sudden, the sigh was at my side, and there stole into the curved hollow of my palm, feeling up my hand, groping their way, cold, creeping creeping fingers.

My room ! I flung the door wide open and held the candle high to light my companion to her threshold. Even in this meagre light the room showed bravely what it was, a comrade. There was geniality in the crimson couch and in the swelling cushions ; in the open book, in the old and ever youthful pictures, comfortable hours and easy friendship lay revealed. The air was redolent with the fragrance of flowers. I was glad that the room looked cheerful. I turned to the door.

It was starlight, you may say, moulded by the shadows into a pale form wherein hung eyes, blurred, wistful, shadowy ; human, strong, entreating. I stared, stared, stared, at the eyes. My whole being lay in my eyes. The world was myself and those shadowy eyes. Of a sudden I looked right through them into the stars and the black night. It was as though I had taken a plunge into water more bottomless

and cold than was ever dreamed of. It was icy, suffocating, overwhelming ; I knew that therein lay an endless drowning. I closed my eyes and dragged my mind back to my body in the doorway. Now I peered at the pale thing through eyes half-closed, lest I should make another plunge through it. The filmy pallor crept nearer to me. There was a little sigh, such as a satisfaction too full for words wins from us when we at length clasp the long-desired. A cold draught played round my hand and shivered through my fingers. Suddenly the candle guttered out and the room lay under a heavy, dark, pall ; and blackness, gloomy, forbidding, morose, fell as a blow upon my eyes. There was a shuffling sound as of limping feathers. I heard a weary, piteous, sigh.

“Wait,” I cried. But when at last the lamp burnt up and the room was once again friendly and cheerful, I looked but into the blank and silent night.

## XI.

### HARDWICK WOOD.

IT was a day made for woods, a day of light breezes to flutter the tree-tops, a day of keen sunshine to peep, with eyes of translucent green, through a veil of leaves. We went out in the cool of the morning across the fields. There was a breath of Spring in the air for the day was in its youth.

The sun was four hours from his full strength, and earth knew one of her happiest moods. There is human glory and strength in the brilliance of colour and bold line of the full day ; the flashing greens breathe virility, and the shadows are as mighty Cyclops striding over the earth ; while noon, the hour of shouting, shadowless, joy, is our human made divine. Dawn is the elusive, the sprite of form invisible ; she moves us from afar, playing upon the clearest, sweetest, notes in the fibre of our beings. We love, we long for her, the rapturous evanescent

one, whose voice is the exquisite fluting of Pan, sweet to sadness. Dawn is our impalpable, our mystery ; she has nothing of human, and therefore though we follow her trail, few of us may commune with her so nearly as to be the bearers of word of her to earth. A great three have known her : the painter Troyon held her in his arms and his *Le Matin* and his *Effet du Matin* are verily the dawn of the day ; and Louis Stevenson had the charm to counteract the magic spell of dawn, so that he, too, gazed clear-eyed through the confusion and mysterious shrouding of her wizardry, and knew her. He, like a morning, has given us the dawn. Mr Meredith is the happy third. The greater number of us see her from afar, and lumberingly blot in some little representation of her, a mere blur of the tenderly mocking, the fleeting, the happy and sorrowful, dawn.

Between this elusive hour and the divine humanity of noon, there is a period of transition, when the day, bending from the sky, droops towards our human understanding. Brilliantly the green of the sunlit leaves glows in the trees near by. Bold is the line of warpy trunks, bright the sparkle of the dew-drops, vigorous and keen are the spears of grass ; the colour of flowers is vividly alive. But, in the far-away, haze, mysteriously grey, droops over trees, dreamily melting into the faint blue sky ; and over the pale shadows of trees, and over the earth, softening the

hollows that would else be dark. Fields are dim olive-green, with stronger colour where a turnip field flushes grey to emerald. Little humps of grey are sheep at pasture. Mystery is dimpling to the known.

It was at this hour that we passed through silver meadows, driving up, as we went, a spray of dewdrops. The cool yellow of cowslip flowers hung over the pasture-land through which our pathway ran. To the right of us lay Madingley Church, shrouded in tearful and mourning yew-trees. We skirted village and plough-land, and through meadows won our way to the ridge of the Gogmagog hills. Here, waiting for us, lay a wide land, sweeping through the lifting haze to a blue sky. The sun had ridden higher into the heavens, and but a little while was wanting ere the full colour of the earth opened, like a rose, to his rays. Now, beneath the pearly grey of mist and dew, lay a promise of greens that soon would flash through their brilliance into golden. The hour pondered, a maiden with drooping eyes, upon a murmuring that stole through her, unnamed, unknown, until he, the golden one, leapt forth to name the wonder, love, and turn her life to colour.

Following the road into the valley, we went through a village which we knew only as a vague redness. It was to us a blur : we left it, and we left the road. For the dewy fields and the warm fragrance

of earth had taken possession of us, and the two great powers, humanity and the road, were as pallid mutes. The scent of the clean mouldering of nature mingled with the scent of young shoots, and shouted to us from the open land. And again we were in the fields, but now we passed through blazing dandelions and grass brilliantly, triumphantly, green. Through the fragrance of flowers that grew momentarily stronger, drawn upward by a powerful sun, we walked and dreamed. Then the pungent scent of leaves awoke us, and we entered the wood.

Cool, dark shadows flung themselves at full length beneath the trees, where purple orchids stood sentry over unruly celandines. Here came Darwin, searching among the flowers for a link in his chain, and oxlips and cowslips, such as those around us, were in bloom, when he found a rare hybrid, the needed clue.

Perilously we adventured through the shaggy world with its myriad eyes of mocking, golden, green. The meandering way through a wood stands with one hand ever behind its back, holding the promised unknown, and our path was tricked out with surprises: now the varnished celandine paled before vivid moss; then the grass dimpled to late primroses, the fairest thought of spring-time. In the cool protection of the undergrowth, trails of honeysuckle were barely in leaf, and laughingly pointed at the early summer their pale green spear-heads. Then the path peeped

over the edge of the undergrowth and, from distant grey to deepest blue, wild hyacinths swept in a flood to our feet. They had the soul of water in them, its joy and mystery, and its responsiveness to every gleam of light. The flowers curled back their lips in laughter as mischievous leaves pelted them with shadows.

Then the blue and green of kissing boughs rose in a melody of eddying colour and drew us from the open, as the mermaid's song captured the sailors of old. Feet followed heart in among the shadows where no sound fell.

Here flicking branches barred our way or sped us on with a swish to shoulder. Shadows moved and dodged behind the trees; there was some one, creeping, holding his breath. A yellow eye peeped at us from beneath a leaf. There he was! With bodies tense and senses alert, we stared at him. The yellow eye twinkled and rolled, it winked in malicious mockery. A rustle half laughed from the rear. He had ripped out one eye and hung it up in the tree, and while we watched the dead and bodiless thing, he had slipped round and was peeping at us from behind! Then creepy gnomes played ghost tunes with our spines for flutes. Terror yapped at our heels ready to grip if our footsteps faltered. And the Man of the Wood set quivering the ground we trod. We turned, and bade him come on as a Christian should, and

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round he had whisked to the rear, and maliciously kicked at our heels.

Silently and with fearful knees, we stole through peeping eyes and tweaking fingers, and won safety, at last, and full deep breaths, in a clearing where lay great logs, and stacks of wood piled breast-high. Cheerfully we gathered up twigs, and fanned a spark to flame. In the heart of the fire was set a pan of water, which bubbled its way to a brew of tea. Then we flung logs upon the blaze and the smoke swayed upwards, blue against the brown tree trunks, white against the sky. In looping coils it sang its joyfulness; it played at leaping with the flames, or spun a thread of silver from a cloudy tangle of grey and blue. Eddying, whirling, it swung to us, bowed, and spun a caracole. Careening, it hunched itself into a low wide mist, which of a sudden whisked into a swirling column of smoke. Then, weary, it hung upon the breath of evening and was wafted, a haze of fainting blue, into the roof of leaves. We gazed at the trail of smoke and at the climbing green, and knew more of the world. Then the heart of the fire fell, and with it our day, and we left our wood for the shadowy fields.

It is a good deed to plant a wood, and a better still to lie in one. For the whispering trees instil a man with peace and virtue, even though he be a trespasser, and he will go out of that wood to

his work with a fresh and leafy soul. And it may be that to all time there will be the murmuring of trees in his heart. He will hear them in his dusty office, through the din of cities ; in his singing, in the painting of his picture, he will hear their voice. Their rustling will come to him in the dim night-time, the time of singing words. And the world will praise the work of the man, but the man will praise the wind in the leaves.

## XII.

### THE ESSAY.

My neighbours had gone to the swimming-bath or the hockey ground, but I had an essay to write. A pile of fresh white paper lay to hand ; it was gleamingly attractive, dazzlingly white. Every necessary book lay upon the desk, and I had built up the fire, so that there could be no interruption to my coming train of thought.

“Four hours,” I pondered, “lie to my will, and I shall spend them pleasurable, moulding the backbone of my essay, and fluttering over the pages of books in search of an unnecessary quotation, which will not lie beneath my finger until I have gleaned fifty well-known phrases which bring to mind as many paragraphs. (This, of course, is nothing but a bamboozling of those stern and haughty minutes that tweak the idle with regrets.) Then I shall turn such sentences as never have been turned before !”

The very thought of their curves set my fingers tingling with eagerness to begin ; stray words were singing in my brain, or champing restively. The pleasure of work was upon me. I anticipated the delights of hammering vague ideas into clarity, and the gratification of work, strong in the finish. It was with something of excitement that I pulled up my chair to the desk and took paper and pen.

Then followed a lawful period of thought ; it slipped into a time of half-hopeful, half-meaningless jottings ; it stamped into a time of impatient scribblings :

“A, B, C ; 1, 2, 3 ;  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ .”

I sank to the depths of drawing monograms ! For though many thoughts were whirling together somewhere deep within me, and now and again flashed the tip of a snout to the surface, I had but to grasp at them, and instantly they spluttered into emptiness. Certain words reiterated themselves in my brain, disjointed and useless words, yapping for admission into the world of ordered syllables. I wanted none of them as yet, these words and phrases. I needed clear thoughts, which still hovered ever ahead of me, evanescent, elusive. They were forceful and real to the half-dreaming brain, but a nothingness still to the touch of the pen, or the grip of a brain, wakeful, acute. Suddenly the empty page leered at me ! Goggle-eyed, unintelligent, empty-

headed, it gaped at me. It was glaringly blank, stridently and raucously silent, insanely white. Its staring eyes paralyzed my pen ; fluttering thoughts dropped dead ; my mind was a smooth white sheet, and the world was a shiny, ivory, page. The paper and I stared at each other, equally blank.

With an effort I broke the spell, and a clammy hand found for me a leaf of paper, bent at one corner, and half-used. In its wrinkled and worn face there lay hope. Headings rushed to the page, thoughts flashed to my mind, and consecutively lay the opening sentences. "If only the clock would not tick." Half a page was covered, and I ventured on to a new and clean sheet of paper. I had almost worried out my chain of thought, and needed only to grapple with one last argument, when the palpitations of the clock baulked me of every idea. The tick, tick, tick, drove words away. Fiercely I seized my insolent timepiece and bumped it down in a far corner of the room. "Tick, tick, tick, tick," it jeered. I said to myself, "This is absurd ; I am above such things," and with unseeing eyes I gazed through the window, into the profoundest depths of thought. Gradually I became conscious of a blind-cord, swinging in the draught ; it swung in time to the beat of the clock. Tick, tick, tick, tick ; it was a pendulum. In desperation I gripped my pen and wrote anything to drown the metallic, exasperating noise. My pen

ticked ! I listened attentively. From beneath the paper came "Tick, tick, ticktock." The spirit of the clock possessed the room. It leapt even upon the fire, and the wavy light set the pictures pulsing, "Flick, flick," the landscapes were ticking. The shadows swayed upon the wall, wagging at me, "Tick, tick." Then the horror reached a climax. "Tick ticktock, tick ticktock," the eyes of Van Dyck's "Charles" were ticking !

I fled the ghastliness for trees and the sane wind. Hand and brain grew cool under the bracing laugh of earth. My mind was at first dumbly irritated, holding its breath against a feared inrush of annoyance ; it did not dare to stand in consciousness. Then it became receptive, limply, bovinely ; accepting any and all impressions, the sight of a brown leaf half-decomposed to its skeleton, the colour of pine-needles, thick upon the ground, and the blade of grass that pierced between the spikes. Then, suddenly, it leapt into consciousness, and rode thunderously into thought.

I went in and wrote, and the clock and the white page were dead to me. Mine was a glorious hour. For the essay danced along upon the lightest of toes, and I could wander leisurely in its wake, straying in the grass margins of my road, where the flowers grew. I read Browning's "Rephan," I gleaned loved passages from Emerson, I won the fruitiest of Meredithian

sayings. I fluttered through Mr Morley's "Cromwell," the edition with portraits, and I rifled half-a-dozen entralling books to verify my references. And my pen only laughed at the length of the pages, though he knew very well that I was a humbug, pretending to be busy, while he did all the work. We were the jolliest, merriest, of comrades.

"Thump!" There was a knock at my door. A voice cried plaintively: "Oh I say, do make tea! Because I've told the others to come. I knew you would like it. They'll be here in ten minutes."

Heavy boots took the voice down the passage. I sprang to the kettle. With a groan, I shut my books and swept papers together. I left them for the gathering of bread, milk, jam, tea-leaves. I would have rated the voice, but time and the bath-room door intervened. Before my angry cheeks were cool, the players had trooped down the corridor, hot and thirsty, so grateful, so eager for tea; and my scowl faded to the fixed smile and puckered brow of the absorbed wielder of a teapot. The hour was thirsty, hilarious, prolonged, and the party lingered on, chattering, until I was the bugbear of my working neighbours. At length the last guest strolled away, and I went with her, for Time already had taken his leave.

That night, when feathery darkness was fanning me to sleep, a little pale ghost glided to my bedside.

It was so small that I did not fear it. Pathetically it wailed, and rocked its tiny filmy form to and fro in grief. So frequently it moaned and sighed, that its speech was at first incoherent ; then, through its sobs, I heard it cry, "Oh, my rounded sentences ! Oh, my flowing pages ! " And I knew the sad little thing for the ghost of my infant-essay.

## XIII.

### THE OLD HOCKEY-GROUND.

THE night was cloudy, and with eyes and feet and hands I groped my way, guarding off as best I could the prickly blows of fir-boughs, and blinking under the pat of the heavy flapping fingers of chestnut-leaves. I went, through the trees and pungent bushes, to the new hockey-ground. The touch of its short, crisp, grass set my blood tingling with the longing for vigorous speed; and even in that glimmer of grey, which was all that the pervading darkness held of light, I could see how the proud levels rolled away in a glory of fresh young strength and in the bold surety of contests to be fought and won.

Beyond the band of trees, lay the old hockey-ground; thither went I. Looking back, I saw the silent, dark, and empty night that lay around me. But here the air was humming with memories, and every blade of grass was a star flinging a beam upon

the shadowy days, the days that are past. It seemed to me that I heard the "click" of the ball beneath the driving ash-stick, and the dull, deep roar of the shouts, raised by the watching crowd. Yet I knew that never again would this ground echo to the voice of the stamping throng, or know the honour of victory. It might be the training ground, but never again the field of battle. Its day had come.

I stood at the burial of a friend. Looking upon my dead, the thought drove through me that never had we known a better comrade ; this field had seen a hundred struggles, it had shouted to our triumphs, it had sternly met our defeats. It had reared teams, formed friendships, stiffened characters.

Yet its day was over, though for a little while it would live in many a pungent memory ; memories of the fresh, clean, scent of the grass on chilly afternoons, and memories as clean of contests fiercely waged. It held memories of the early morning run, most strong-limbed of things, and invigorating to body and mind, but nevertheless a thorn in the flesh of the keenest player. Even on that summer's night, the scent of the grass flung me back to the pale mornings of creeping mists, when cobwebs hung white in the fir-trees, and the air lay solidly cold in the depths of our lungs. Whistling by me, were memories of exhilarating hours when the wind raced across the bowing country-side, and swooped upon the players.

Then the fun of the afternoon lay in battling with the wind rather than in pursuit of the ball. Ever he had the last word. We might fight our way past him the length of the ground, and gulp him down in sobbing breaths, and then make a run for it, quick for the doorway, the staircase, and tea : he would catch us a bang on the back as we reached the door. Traced in black and white were the memories of the day when we won the Hockey Cup. Few of us had known as stiff a fight before. Then our whole life lay upon this field ; these were the things that were real, the skilful "pass," the neat "dribbling," the rush for the goal, the grass and the white line. Four deep stood the spectators ; they were a blur, a make-believe, filling a sham life by making little shouts which reached us from miles away, and with which we had nothing to do. But we were intensely alive ; so we ran, and calculated the reach of the foe, and made that ball work to the College's fame. Crowding were the memories of humourously quixotic fights, and of the most loveably absurd hard work ever given by man. Rough and tumble games with friends ; the rightful joy in suppleness of body and in speed of foot ; jolly afternoons in the crisp biting air with a cold sun setting in grey ; such were the memories thronging the hockey-ground. As breezy as the winds they were, and as gracious as our wide clean skies.

I awoke to the present and to chilliness with the

striking of the clock. Slowly it tolled out the hour of midnight. The air was strangely cold. The night was moaning. I had an uncanny feeling that something, invisible to my human eyes, was hovering near me. The place seemed to me the haunt of ghosts. Little sighs trembled through the air. The grass quivered beneath phantom feet.

Memories, the thoughts that are the pale ghosts of the has-been, not the infants-in-arms of our future deeds, were hovering here. For they haunt the ground, and from north and south, from foreign lonely lands, from wheresoever there are any dreaming of their golden and heroic age, memories are floating to the old, grey field, that is more to the dreamers than the ground for a game. The ghosts even of our old, old age will be fluttering there, playing once again the game of the ball and the game of life. Often they will flit in loneliness, unable to recognise one another ; but sometimes they will drift forth together, from a fireside where many friends are gathered and, in a blaze of sunlight, will they throng upon the field.

## XIV.

### GIRTON VILLAGE GRAVEYARD.

A GRAVEYARD seems the home of heavy-eyed and mournful yew trees and of lugubrious thoughts, but Girton's is almost a cheerful place. Wailing sorrow and moping desolation are as strangers here : warrior-spirited, it lies in the centre of shouting, jubilant life, vigorous wheat-blades and happy children. For a low wall alone separates it from the village school, and from the plough-land which stretches away in a flush of young green shoots to where a wind-mill flings welcoming arms to the breeze. Calmly, bravely, it displays its ranks of green mounds, and gazes steadfastly through the sunshine to the blue hills of Madingley. Death seems less terrible here than when banished as a thing of mouldering skulls and cross-bones, to a cemetery, out of sight of house and cottage. Here it is permitted to play its natural and not unkind part, and is given a seat as a neighbour.

There is nothing morbid in such treatment of death ; in fact it is more healthy-minded thus to stand cheek by jowl with Time's old beadle, than to flee his name, his neighbourhood, and his approach. For those who shun death, shun life as well : they have no time to live, for they are absorbed in the jealous rivalries of pills and fears, and fidget through their years in a pusillanimous pother about what they dare not do. Happiness is not "prudent," so they steer by the good things of life with a coffin for a harbour and complainings for crew. They would do better to ride to hounds in pink coats on a merry morning, and break their consequential necks over the first "oxer," since no joy do they gain from life, and I have my belief that, at their journey's end, they will stand in heavy debt to the happiness of their families and their neighbours. But death, taken as an item in life, is ignored ; and amongst those who treat him neighbourly there will be none found studying the topography of their own graveyards.

Side by side lie the green mounds here, grouped in families. In this quaint ugly village, the owners of these hummocks lived and loved and toiled together, ploughing their land and ringing their marriage bells and reaping the corn, while skin turned to copper-colour and the unimportant world wagged on. Then they laid each other in the earth, and for a little space some one wept. But soon the grass crept up, and

then, save for an occasional rustling, all was still and quiet.

Indeed, the peace of this graveyard might at times feel dull, and a man of action perhaps would prefer a burial at sea. For the rolling waters do at least promise that there shall be no lack of movement and variety. Verily what a strange company is there beneath the waves! Haughty Spaniard and phlegmatic Hollander, Briton, Frenchman, deadliest of foes, now hobnob together. Precedence and rank are lost in this freakish ship's crew; admirals are jostled by common sailors, and roll the bottom with step as unsteady as the jolliest of roving sea-dogs. A man must have a daring spirit indeed, ere he venture in this cutlassed company, and the gentle-natured had best accept the green mound and the peace, which, after all, becomes the end of life.

There is something pleasantly companionable about these graves, with their contented, if bowed, heads; and, notwithstanding their modesty and homeliness, they do not lack in dignity. There is more exclusiveness in an urn, but it is too artificial an atmosphere for my tastes. Nor would I have the heart to inflict upon posterity so speaking a monument to the vanity of flesh and the triviality of this human life of ours; while any man who has made even the little clatter of his clogs upon the stoneway would shrink ere he merged his personality in a piece of

marble. There is a wild eloquence in scattering your ashes to the winds ; so may you reach to the uttermost ends of the earth, and rise to the heights of heaven. But in-urn your remains, and you become the *protégé* of a portion of carved stone, which for ever will take precedence of that inconsiderable handful of cinders to which you have reduced yourself. The green mound is far more consistent with the dignity of man, and his human body shall rest happily in the breast of Earth.

Only one burial-place is there, more to be desired than the green-browed earth, but he who would win it must follow Alaric, the brain-flame of the Visigoths, through his meteor course into the river-bed. Alaric, mightiest of warriors, great world-moulder, he who stood, as they acclaimed him king, upright on the grey blue shield, for centuries has lain stark beneath the steel blue water. Grief-swept, the Visigoths held back Busento's stream, and laid their hero in the grave hewn for him in the river's channel. Thus Alaric, the storm-bringer, the storm-checked, found his rest beneath the singing water. His was the royalist of graves, for the foeman's foot could never desecrate his earth-shroud, and day and night before him the greatest of Earth's singers chanted the song of life and death. But to Girton's simple peasants the green mound would be more acceptable than the lonely resting place of kings. And I confess that I,

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for one, should rest more sedately in my grave under the murmuring green than under the song of a river, which would stir me into movement, and I should hover, a tiresome phantom, over my trembling heirs. Yet though the grass has a homelier voice, it warbles no silly ditties : its chant is a song universal. For the world through the grass-blades are rippling in the wind, rustling a song of that bravery of life which makes death insignificant. Strong is the voice of the green singer in this churchyard : unperturbed by the black shadow of a gargoyle that hangs, a heavy grimace, from the roof of the nave, the grass leaps up from the church-side, and sways over the simple graves from wall to wall. Many of the mounds are without headstones or commemorative lines, but above them, better far than chiselled eulogies, the grass waves a breezy, manful epitaph.

Here could a man rest freely and uncramped. For this graveyard is a corner of the rolling earth ; there are no formal gravelled paths, no funereal borders, no nurse-maids and perambulators, to tether mind to coffin. The low walls bar not out the laughter of children and the laughter of the golden-headed barley, while the fragrance of bean-flowers can drift hither for sunny harbourage. And the grass is the grass of the shaggy world, full of vigour and freedom and hope.

## XV.

### THE RUN: AN EPISODE IN TRAINING.

THE red light of the siren-voiced fire leapt from book to book, and turned to beckon me on, luring me to a gracious evening's reading.

Red-shirted were they who called beneath my window, bidding me come for a run.

Within, shadows dreamed in the ruddy arms of the glow, and all the care and the sharpness of life were dumb; even the stiff, angular corners of the room were rounded by the flickering light. Guilefully the fire flung into the shade the broad-backed dullards on my shelves, and lit up the gilded titles of well-loved books, so that a row of golden eyes enticed me to remain.

Without, everything was standing with head thrown back. No lounging for bushes nor stretching of lazy limbs among the trees on such a night as this! For the air was bitingly fresh, frost whitened fir-trees

and grass, and coated laurel leaves with rime. Moonlight leapt between every bough and twig, until not the smallest branch could have dropped asleep.

It was a martial-spirited night ; the very sight of it through the window-panes shouted of hurricanes met and of marches tramped, and spoke of blows encountered.

I was down the echoing stairway, where the runners stamped, impatient, and out amidst the nipping fingers of the night. Trees loomed up gigantic, athletes stripped for their wrestle with winter weather. We were past them, past the bushes where briar scents lead to lazy hours on the summer's day. There was no scent now save that of earth, clean, fresh, invigorating. We were past the honeysuckle hedge, favourite haunt of the feathered family-man. Twitterings were there none ; the only sound was the breathing of runners, and the footfalls beating sharply on the frozen ground.

We were striding over silver bars, every sinew braced to welcome the glorious night ; every muscle controlled, but straining for freedom in this keen brave air. Quicker the pace now ! Stripes of black leapt across the path. White as may-blossom hung frosted twigs in the moonlight. We quickened the run to a swinging pace, and ran through the singing air, past shadows hurrying through the undergrowth, past trees racing to the skies.

Hardly a leaf clung to its bough, for windy had the autumn been. Leaves manage their affairs better than most of us. In Spring, when all things long to sing, trees swell into the round notes of buds; while in Summer leaves are broad so as to catch every splash of sunshine. In Winter they wisely go away. No one looks well in soaking garments, and a tree hanging as an embodiment of drip is a sorry affair. But against a background of grey drizzle, the naked form of a tree, with its curving branches fining into a thousand slender twigs, is a joy which the gloom of weeping weather cannot disperse. And when frost flings every bough gleaming into the heavens, even the aloof and kingly stars flock out in multitudes to sing upon the tree-tops.

Everything was wild with joy of life, mad, delirious. The cold night air rushed by our ears, shouting! Big black shadows chased small grey brothers until, head over heels, they toppled into the hazels. Elm twigs leapt to the moon, and chopped it into fifty pieces. Tree trunks could not contain their exuberance, and perforce duplicated themselves into heavy black shadows. All among the grass the frost crystals played at being stars. Twigs yapped like merry little barking dogs, and the moon buffeted the giant clouds, and sent a golden grin into their dark faces. Then, with a wild skirl, the wind was up! It ruffled merrily through the trees, and rolled in the grass,

kicking with delight. Under the bushes it whisked, and chivied out the laggard leaves ; and away they went, wind and leaf, tumbling, rolling over and around each other, panting and rustling, spinning, whirling, set to partners, bow and curtsey, up the line, twirl together, till the leaf took fright and dashed madly underneath a laurel.

Then the wind swooped upon the runners, flung arms around them, tried to harry them out of their course. He blew brambles and larch boughs across the path, to trip them by the heel. But they dug an elbow into his ribs, and ran. Then he flung a hand upon their throats and tripped their breath with his cold sharp touch.

Frozen puddles crackled like yule-logs, hoping to deceive us and make us stay. But on we ran. We were past the pink may bushes, where the nightingales sing June through. Now crimson shirts flashed beneath crimson berries, and the only bird voice that greeted us came from the rooks that flapped up, cursing.

Suddenly there was an absolute stillness. The only sound was the snap, snap, that the path flung back in answer to our feet. Clouds slipped across the moon, and in the darkness trees, bushes, and path, leaped swiftly, silently, together, plotting. The moon was taking a peep at us through a chink in the clouds, to see that we were still there, had not

escaped. Then there was the sound of creeping. It was the gentlest murmur, so low that they thought we should not hear. The trees were preparing to spring. Stealthily they were gathering up their whispering boughs ; there was a rustling in bushes and grass. Then with a "Whoop !" every tree, shrub, grass-blade, was in movement, shouting, booing, shrilling ! The whole earth was noisy with the sound of their motion through the air. They were at a trot, they were at a gallop, the wood was up and after us !

## XVI.

### A SUMMER SUNDAY.

THERE is a spinney of larch and fir-trees and around it the grass springs up as high as a man's knee. Buttercups and purple scabeus grow there, and wreaths of blue vetch and pink and white clover. Tall grasses, white with sunshine, sway across the open, and plunge into the black shade of flowering shrubs and bushes. Above them rise elms, black against the blaze of sunlight, and fir-trees, black in the hearts of them, and palest green where, in the upward bend of boughs, sunshine glimmers in the open fingers. Here an immense sky lays a hand upon the lips of human business. In deepest azure, the sky of our nearer earth smiles down upon our importance benignly, sympathetically, but in the far away an elusive whimsical blue prompts eyebrows to rise in query at mankind, until his purposes shrink to air, and the reality of life is a wide sky and the pink smile of that clover.

Here it is good to lie on a summer Sunday.

Behind me there is a hedge where the birds love to build ; it is not so high as to bar out the view of a cabbage field, purple and green, and a stretch of country narrowed now by the hot summer haze, though on a clear day in Spring it meets the sky far out beyond St Ives.

Beyond the hedge is a winding path. You cannot imagine anything so wonderfully twisted. Yet if it had wished it could have taken one straight stride through the fir-trees, for they grow far apart and there is no need for this picking of ways. But it is a path without one utilitarian motive. It is just a curl. It has the soul of a waltz. It is a very butterfly of a path, irresponsible, life's dilettante. It is the gayest ripple of a path, with a happiness so infectious that you cannot carry your cares along it.

These things lay behind me, and it was a day wherein to lie in long cool grass, dreaming in the brilliant arms of summer, lover-eyes turned to the gaze of her golden blue. No turning of head or motion of limbs on such a day as this ! Therefore, the things which lay behind I saw through the back of my head, a way by which much pleasure travels. For the good things which come from the rear are those which are well known and well tried, peaceful things, of a nature to give much happiness, love-worn things. There is a pleasure and freshness in the

forward view, but ever a gleam of battle for those who live beneath a law whereby the fittest survive. Both pairs of eyes we need, but without those in the back of the head we should be smaller men.

Upon these lazy days, when the drowsy movement in tree-tops is as the nodding of heads, and all things seemingly are drooping heavy eye-lids over sleepy eyes, earth is in reality intensely awake. For now every sound is astir, the rustling of grasses, song of the lark, bird calls in every spinney, the shrill hum of delirious flies and the deeper note of the bumble bee; the snap of popping gorse-pods. Every scent is alive, and one and all fleet out upon the air, throbbing together to form the hot, sweet breath of a summer's day. Here there is the clean, sharp scent of birch-leaves, and the exquisite Eastern fragrance of fluffy purple plantain-flowers.

Such a day Dante surely had known when he wrote upon the blessedness of peace. "It is manifest that universal peace is the best of all those things which are ordained for our blessedness. And that is why there rang out to the shepherds from on high not riches, not pleasures, not honours, not length of life, not health, not strength, not beauty, but peace." Truly a peace as of this blue-heavened day is the silence, the momentary pause, ordained by nature before her storm, or the thunder of man, the glorious, the great thing, that draws strength from

his brain ; it is the birth of his art. And it is the mother of fullest happiness. For these hours of peace can alone quicken us to the thrill preluding the kiss that lurks in every pool of gold in the dappled shadow. The bustlers, the spendthrifts of life, are strangers to all but the days of brilliant sunshine, the glaringly golden that would dazzle even the blind. They lose the minute, but rapturous, pleasures which may flower the path of life. More than this, they of the prodigal spirit depend upon poets and diaries, red plush mementoes, and china souvenirs, for the jerk to memory. But schooled in the idle, peaceful hour, memories never will be sought : they will leap to you, the pleasure of past music, of a picture long since seen, of a flowered meadow or red budding wood, or the memory of the fanning of wind through your hair.

Ledgered and booted affairs begrudge us these hours of schooling, they condemn the intrusion of your simple, their reasonless, joys into practical and horny-handed life.

But an acute sensibility to happiness is an acquisition worth the sacrifice of some small measure of learning and pence. We arrogate to sorrow the qualities both of the upper and the nether mill-stone, grinding out good meal ; we still believe in the chaff-threshing power of pain. But as our world progresses less and less shall we dare play the humbug and,

Caliban-like, flatter the woes of this life. Nor will we be servilely content to reel towards perfection on the arm of pain, who neighbours ugliness, denying, because less within our reach, that the ideal is to attain full growth through happiness, brother of beauty and truth. Now in a narrowly monastic spirit we hope to discipline character by the thong, but a ready perception of happiness can bring us more truly than all the woes of creation, gentleness of spirit and a bosky soul. The leaders of mankind whether they be tonsured, aproned, gowned, or merely hide-bound believe this not and still prefer to build us backbones out of sorrow ; and we, pursuing our scourged way, necessarily seek bellied consolations, and still the legs of the world stumble over stoups and pots.

There is truth in Friar John's cry :—

“ He that lacks time to mourn lacks time to mend,  
Eternity mourns that. Where sorrow's held intrusive  
And barred out, there wisdom will not enter,  
Nor true power, nor aught that dignifies humanity.”

But he will be a walking skull and cross-bones, lacking brain and worth, who, life-long, lacks the time for Dante's peace or the great blue days.

Now birds were singing from branches whose shadows grew longer, overtaking bright-faced buttercups and daisies, who pleaded for yet a little sunshine. Near me a great cluster of St John's-wort sparkled

in the evening sunlight. Amid the petals, daintiest of stamens that ever flower had, shone in feathery plumes as the Christ-Child's hair when Memling's hand sang his praise to God. The chime of bells rang out from Girton and stole up in mellower tones from more distant Cambridge, murmuring of a calm day drawing to a close. There was now but a crimson hymn of sunset, one or two grey psalms, and a short benediction of night, between me and the workaday world. In the grey-blue of heaven dreaming clouds drew together, and lay, arms entwined, curled in the rounding curves of limbs. Shadows were crooning a lullaby to trees and fields, and the hour stole out upon tip-toes. The earth was falling asleep in the arms of mysterious peace.

Meanwhile I lay in the grass and forgot the sour-faced baggage, Monday.

## XVII.

### THE MIND'S FIRESIDE.

**FIRE** is the divinest gift which Prometheus brought to man. There is eternal wisdom in the glowing logs, and endless bravery in the sparks which rise chattering and swaying together, like a flight of birds. In the flame will you find companionship upon those days when melancholy rattles his cross-bones at your ear, and it is the fire which aptly flickers a whimsical jig to your nocturnal revels. And be it heart, or mind, or soul, or merely wooden pen, which requires inspiration, there shall be found quickening and fulness of strength in the life of the fire. Reverently we acknowledge that a fire has its bad moments ; the early morning, when miserable grey ashes make their exodus with that metallic Babel which, in housemaid phraseology, is “doing the grate.” And there is the day when a thin line of smoke squirms its way upwards, while an unimpressed kettle stands idly by ; and the lonely summer nights when a breathless heat smothers the fire’s life.

But there is one fire alive at all hours of the day and night and at all seasons of the year. Even the coldest day is not embittered by the sight of a thin line of grey crawling upwards from snivelling ashes, nor yet can the heat of a July noon banish you from the singing flames. For this is the fireside of the mind, the happiest place upon earth. Hither, from grumbling backbones or vociferous larder, hastens the mind, to snuggle for a happy hour upon its own hearth. No morning brooms chivy comfort from it here, no sweeps flap periodically amidst the chimney-pots. For this fire is lit and tended by the fury-soft, elbow-deep, happiness born of leafy hours and of the lover-eyes for pictures, books, and men.

Shadows hover at times over the flames but shortly they will run for it or perish, since men are naturally of a brave and cheerful countenance and will not brook this drumming of sullen heels upon their hearth. Happy is it indeed that from wheresoever scholars gather up our bones, our minds may still claim descent from the great old sires of the thwacking blows, the warrior progenitors of fistful tribes. Frown not, oh, ye stern-eyed shades, at the dirges which the puny waul, nor glower upon the many brows puckered over ledgers. These are but the superficial failings of your offspring, and still, deep in the hearts of them, your old warrior spirit lies

untamed. Wool replaces steel, but does not oust the spearman's scorn for lamentation at the blows of life. Even in the squalid corners of the world, where worries alone bulge a man's pockets, life is faced with a hat-becocked eye, and though coats may be ragged, knightly clank the pluck-spurred heels. Give a man but half a lung and I vouch he will whoop a war-cry: be he one-legged, upon a crutch will he strut through life! Verily though it have but the sputtering power of a penny squib, there is a brave tendency to be happy in the breast of every man, and we all have an instinct to clap the world upon the shoulder and remember his jollities rather than his frowns.

The mind's fireside is, therefore, ever ruddy and bright. Recollections of books now quicken the flames, and now in the fire's heart glitter those things which are for the secret satisfaction of a man alone, little child touches, hopes and furtive prayers; the laugh of friends, home throbs of the great good earth; things so small as to be absurd and yet which have made him human. And presently the mind flings a log upon its embers in the thought of sunny woodlands and primrose banks, or the remembrance of a tight line in a rippled stream. And yet others, in the gallop of a winter's day, and the gap in the hedge, and the soft grass where you took the brook, and the whimper of hounds as the hill was breasted; or in the memory of the first bud of a long-tended

plant and the gladness of the rose-bed. And the merry sparks leap and laugh.

Mystery droops in heavy and awful folds over this fireside. Here, by this impalpable fire, comrades spring up and are gone without a footfall or a by-your-leave. It seems that to meet with interest man or woman upon a printed page is equivalent to presenting them with a latch-key apiece ; and though you give no invitation, there will be a tribe of comrades seated around your hospitable hearth. The mind keeps strange company and a most incongruous crew cluster by the fire : Goth and Vandal chieftains, ruffians grim enough to blanch any ordinary blaze to an ashen hue ; fair Victorian ladies ; buccaneering sea dogs ; here hobnob together. The disreputable find constant harbourage upon my hearth-stone, for scoundrels of the mind and hand have an attraction for me. Merrily roll the evenings when Chilperic holds revelry with "Falstaff" and "Silver." Hours shrink to moments before the eye of the third Richard and the frown of Louis Onze ; meteor-like, time flashes by whilst Gaiseric and Clovis criticise each other's kingcraft. Machiavellian statesmen plot together and the aping minutes muffle themselves in cloaks, and slink away, secretly, swiftly, slyly. Up leaps the fire as Jane Austen chaperones in a bevy of fair maidens ; sovereignly crimson it glows before Pericles ; at the name of Belisarius, martially it blazes.

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Other than these will tend my neighbour's fire, but well he knows that most propitious hour when night pads silently over the feathery meadows of eventide, to close us in with shadows. Stranded in the gloaming alone with the fire-lit room, his own little corner of the world is perforce pressed close to his heart ; the cushioned chair beckons, books are laughing, laughing, on the wall, and memories creep to his elbow. Then, as the embers woo the log he flings upon the gleed, his mind slips away to that fireside of its own, and curls up in the dancing light.

## XVIII.

### TEA-TIME.

**APPLE** cheeked and cheery, meals are man's ancient gossips and counselling cronies. They pat the weary man upon the shoulder, filliping his spirits and blurring to his eyes the creases of the world. They waft new colour before the artist's brain, and inspirit the pens of all but the young lady's poet who dines upon rose-leaves and dew. To the winds with your patent compressed foods and genteelly compressed appetites! Meals are too profoundly instinct with benefit to man thus to be crushed out of flowing heartiness. They are worth your sturdy demolition ; indeed, so highly do I regard them that I would go to socialistic lengths, and have you encourage them, in company with your soap and temperance, among your unappreciative lower orders.

Unhappily, like other good fellows, meals are of uneven temper. Dinner is often stiff and pedantic, a ramrod in a shirt front ; and even in the grateful chiming of an epicurean and wholly artistic dinner, there is ever one acidular note twitting us with future rotundity. The eye of a late breakfast has a

habit of fixing a censorious and unblinking stare upon the muncher of cold toast, choking his painful way through a solitary meal. Luncheon is a tricksy repast: here it is a dry utilitarian prelude to the athlete's afternoon, developing at a later hour into an all too bony epilogue to lectures ill-advisedly prolonged. Undependable, wayward, humoursome, such must be the verdict upon our staple meals.

Afternoon tea, on the contrary, we know for wholly gracious. Daily it beams upon us with a smile of Pickwickian kindness, inspiriting all and sundry. The fractious biter of his pen may now postpone, in all righteousness, his pursuit of elusive ideas, and the idler wins reprieve for his thumb-twirling by the meritorious wielding of a toasting-fork. Staunch to the friendly hour, home come the walkers, thirsty with the pace of the white road or the heat of argument. And now the fair pale lines of the playing fields sing, siren-voiced, in vain, for players; all have trooped up their several stairways and are gathered, burnished and tamed, around the homely kettle.

Even the busiest day looks in upon tea-time with a kindly nod. It is an irresistible hour. The gurgling kettle hums and croons, upon the hearth, a lay as old and as fresh as our country-side ditties; it shouts a full-stop to the down-trodden who have sleepily toiled throughout the afternoon. Up leaps a flame

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of gold, and sways, curving, bending, twining, a spangled nautch-girl, and the teapot winks to her from twenty golden eyes. The warmth of the fire and the eastern fragrance of the brew creep around the tea makers. Curled amidst cushions or perched upon the window-sill, they revel in two sensations, merited ease and the pleasant aching of well-stretched limbs. In lazy intermittent speech they tell of the fortunes of war, and plan our future on the playing-field, and they chat of someone's heroine and another someone's poem. Even scholars unknit their well-provided minds and laugh humanly over our latest Cambridge "yarn" or college joke.

At Girton there is hazard and adventure in a tea-party, and this adds a flavour to the entertainment. The tea-hour may find all preparations in their final bibs and tuckers, water boiling, muffins toasted, and a cake eminently presentable in a wreath of almonds. But in our third years, tea-making is generally the solace of one who has fled from rain swept tennis-court or an insoluble problem. Then we are invited upon condition that we lend our jam or currant-cake. Often we are perilously near to tealessness, baulked of joviality by a smoking fire or cold-hearted kettle. Often our tea is deferred until guests have gathered the provender: scudding down the corridor, they barter invitations for butter and milk; bread and buns in hand, they bicker with

their host over the efficacy of toasting for mildew. Then the kettle, with a kick, gurgles of water ready to man's need, and the last kindred soul hurries down the corridor with a honey-jar.

With such a cup of tea we imbibe much humility. Athletes blessed with prowess of eye and foot and hand ; lovers who have communed through the purple morning with far away Athenians ; undaunted climbers up young blood's crag to the sun ; here are we met together. And not one of us has a value of his own in the eyes of that tea-pot. To it we are but the *protégés* of a biscuit, the parasites of a pot of jam, the shadows following a bun. Only by their contrivance do we sip from our tea-cups. Theirs is the prominent place, we must sit at their feet and be humble.

Nevertheless there are no teas merrier than those where scraps take precedence of men. They are in character informal, unceremonious, and in hour that goodly time when twilight gives leash to the colour of fire. Within an open hand they hold jollity and easy speech : if our work is fretting through a crisis, a direful pressure of reading and problems, we may crunch a toasted bun, nod to our host, and be gone ; or, unshackled by work and by time, three or four of us will linger on, talking through the shadows, while the day fades and the starlings cease their chatter in the shrubs below.

## XIX.

### WINDY CAMBRIDGE.

OUR civilization is a windy thing, rushing upon us from the centuries, an overwhelming blast. It has the madness and inconsequence of the wildest of gales, and that love of mischief which the rascal breezes know. It blasts us with icy and brainless customs ; it pats us on the back, a gust from the freedom-loving Northmen. It whoops a shout Teutonic, then eddies back to Jewry, or wafts us a lily-breath from Ithaca, the fragrant. Chuckling, it blows us into motor-cars, whips our cocked hats off our heads and crams us into "bowlers" ; it drives us into evolution, general suffrage, coal-smoke. Yet we welcome every incongruous gust, knowing that our age, our cities, and our men, are the sons of a sweeping gale.

If you would hear the full booming of this wind, you have but to travel to some ancient town. A mere

village may be left stranded, stuffy, breathless, with ideas as close and narrow as when its first cot was blown into being, and with man and roof becalmed in some woolly pond. But a town is whistling with the wind. For buildings are the very fingers to catch the breezes of centuries ago, and hold them fast. Every quaint corner in the narrow streets has wound itself around some baby puff; jolly gusts are fast in the grip of Norman archways, while the grotesque carving over lintels clings to some quaint and merry breeze, which fans our cheeks with the humour of another age.

Cambridge is among the windiest of towns, for she has been the home of Britons, Romans, Saxons and Normans, each in their day; for centuries she was a great market-town, and for centuries she has been a world-famed university. It is little wonder, therefore, if she has gathered up from every age a wealth of ancient buildings, strange traditions, and peculiar ways, each one of which has its tale to tell of peoples, ideals, and a life, that have gone. These are the fingers which have caught at the gale of Civilization as it drove over the land, drawing to themselves from this greatest of winds some murmuring puff, which they have to all time made their own.

There are some fingers which every guide-book and every American hastens to honour, the revered tip of each they kiss punctiliously. You may see or

hear them at this ceremony every day ; they minutely describe, explore, run through, and buy picture post-cards, of all those landmarks of ours which are peculiarly prominent. The Round Church, the Market-place, our chief college buildings, are of course the recipients of these honours. But there are many other fingers, ignored by the multitude, perhaps, though they too have their story and hold innumerable memories, breezes which they have filched from the gale.

Queer and narrow streets run through the town, whispering, in their overhanging and crooked houses, of the past. And there are little paved and walled-in alleys which slip quietly down to the river, and murmur upon still nights of the townsmen of old, who passed this way from the river to their mud and lath houses, bearing in each hand a pailful of water, a pailful of river water, of washing water, a swinging pailful of the main highway, a splashing pailful of the main drain, a dusky pailful of their household beverage. Who knows what they called it, those stoutly constitutioned forerunners of ours, whose historian attributes their healthiness to the excellence of their drinking-water ? We know at least that they used it, and that they lived long enough to set in motion a wind which drove through the ages, and still murmurs to us in their old paved alleys of those un-tubbed, insanitary, days. These alleys caused

many a struggle between Vice-Chancellor and Mayor, for the gownsmen were constantly appropriating the meadows along the river-side, pleading their need for new buildings. But the townsmen refused to be left thirsty and parched in the background, cut off from all communication with their stream, and these alleys stand as the trophies wrested by the Town from the University. They are somewhat slender and pathetic trophies, these narrow back-ways, but nevertheless to all time they will bear witness to the struggles between wealthy Influence and those square-chinned hot-headed fellows, the Englishman's Rights.

Jetting out into back streets, are some humble corners of our college buildings, corners which the Guide-book ignores, though they too hold a breath of the great wind. Humourous memories cling to them of those hard-living and hard-working days, when a gracious divine could speak of the gentle sons of the Cam as "the Chickens of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the Sweet Swallows of Salvation"; plain, bare, corners they are, in all truth, yet they tell of the poor scholars who dined off a penny piece of beef between four, and slept five in a bed to keep warm, betaking themselves to it at dusk since they had not the wherewithal to purchase a candle.

Every ancient town, I am convinced, is breezy with memories and old customs, which whistle in tower and steeple of the world-wide gale; and yet I claim

that Cambridge is the breeziest of all. She surpasses every other, thanks to one little finger peculiar to herself, a little dimpled finger crooked around the quaintest puff of wind. From a strange dent in some human mind a tradition sprang up, and whistled through the ages, a tradition that Cambridge butter should be made in long thin rolls ; and to-day you may buy it in a rod, such as was sold in those great fairs which gave to Cambridge a world-wide reputation throughout the Middle Ages. Batons such as these were sold to the earliest of undergraduates, and according to the condition of his pocket, he cut an inch or a quarter of an inch for his slice of bread. These rolls of butter are the shadows of an old idea, they are fingers twined around the breezes ; and though their flavour be not of the best, yet on the dull, sad, day when every other habitation of men is muggy, airless, heavy, you may butter yourself a slice of bread, and munch a windy meal in the windiest of towns.

## XX.

### SATURDAY NIGHT.

ON Saturday the week stretches itself, flings aside quill and spade at the fiddle's call, and prepares to be merry. The jolly hours, the world through, hearken to singers at their roundelay, they sway in time to the measure of the dance, and they set the blood whirling as they click by to the chattering of castanets. Or the starry hours will throb radiantly through the evening to glimmering day, while a reader bends to the open book. And here, maybe, true friends are met together to honour the night ; then the hours are spurring at a gallop over the confabulating heads of cronies.

Cambridge, by dinner and dance and song, shared in the world's celebration of the merry evening. But there was an hour peculiarly its own, an hour the fullest and most gracious in our Saturday night, stealing in upon us when melody had waned and the dancing feet were still. It was then that, wandering

upon the arm of a friend through the starry murmur of the night, we followed the trail of the tuneful fire. For there was in every room, on Saturday night the hearth hospitable, where many friends talked the new week in. And sure am I that a week brought in with laughter is a week fortold to a happy ending.

Here a tap would win us a sleepy "Begone"; or the room alone would reply to our knock, speaking to us of the absent owner in the voice of books and china and deep-framed pictures, which seemed but half themselves, half him, their friend, and ours. Sure of a welcome yet to be, we sauntered through dim corridors until we won from Saturday his golden gift, converse of friends around the laughing fire.

Conversation, real talking, not gossip and inane chatter, the cobwebs hampering clarity of brain and the fluting tongue, is a divine contrivance, bearing strength to friendship. In all good fellowship, talkers explore together that Babel of impressions called the back of the mind; and meanwhile they ride into life-long friendship, for such is the fortune of those who have thought and worked together. This conversation is quickened into being by a fire and Saturday night. The flickering nature of flame, and the warmth of a fire's colour, are in full harmony with talking. Sunshine sets the mind acaper, and the bold day mocks your hesitating speech. And in moonlight you must be a very ranter or an orator with a golden voice, ere

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you dare break the silvery stillness. But a fire speaks with so many tongues that reply you must, save you be of a deeply sullen nature. It fills the air with generous warmth which dissipates all stiffness, and so thoughts find voice even in the timid. The ruddiness of its glow is conducive to talk, for you can trot out into its benevolent light the world's oldest ideas, and think them your own, so rosy are their faces. In this refinding of old ideas there lies much pleasure, and greater benefit than in voyaging by their sunlit shores under the guidance of an ancient navigator. For he who sails through life his own adventurer will be an excellent companion to his friends and to himself. Equipped with the spirit of discovery, he will have a domesticated and private wind to blow him briskly to his last harbour, where you will find his hold as well plenished with interests as at his embarkation. For upon all things will he look with the breezy freshness of Elizabeth's adventurers. And truly he is one of them in spirit, though he is an out-and-out landlubber, and never discovers what is new but to himself.

Fire is a magician ever evolving vertebrate ideas from mollusc shadows ; and verily there is no better way of crystallizing the vague within you into living thoughts than in sympathetic converse with a friend to the music of the fire. The responsive flame flickers and wanes with the dying down of voices, it rises

into full, strong chords of light as the talk spins on. And now it is as fitful as our tongues, and throws out a shoot of blue and now a dart of orange, and plays a run of shadow on the wall. Then its magic spell is fast upon us, and the fire leaps to flame. To flame leaps our talk ! The wizard has won from our tongues stentorian convictions whose hazy form, one hour back, our minds but vaguely knew. But henceforth they will be a part of us, and we have a new wealth won from the evening's converse.

Even as the fire plays the sweetest music to talking friends, the time that is truly in harmony with the spirit of friendship is Saturday night. At the end of the week, we are cheerful in the memory of work thoroughly at end, or philosophically happy, since, at this late hour, striving with the week's work is but unguerdoned sorrow ; while now even the ardent toiler must pause for the winning of breath. The name of the day tinkles of sunny and gentle hours. Like wine, the week is the better for age ; Saturday is its mellow day, and if you are not in harmony then with your friends, be sure there is some hidden antipathy between you, and go your several ways ! I cannot forgive stiffness in my friends at the end of the week. Monday is in close connection with the wash-tub, it is an ironed and a goffered day, and starchiness may be allowed upon it. But Saturday should be graced with God-sent crumples.

I can see, now, the room where we often talked of a night until the cocks put us to shame. A curtain, looped to the wall, let in the moon-beams and a sight of the keen shadows of trees upon the grass. Within the room, all things were bathed in ruddy light, and the curling petals of chrysanthemums gathered up the colour in glowing pleasure, and laughed at their own grotesque shadows. Above the desk hung shelves bearing quaint earthenware, Georgian platters, and early Victorian cups. Now and again they blinked, and through the gloom we caught the gleam of a little bright eye. Among the poplars of Hobbema, glib shadows were whispering together; then, fluttering as wind amid the boughs, they set the trees swaying with unnatural ease. A dark-omened ghoul crouched in the corner, ready to pounce upon us when the light should die, and vigorously we strove to keep our guardian bright. There was a great green arm-chair by the fire, and the moonlight fell on a settee in the window. For the rest, chairs and tables formed hobgoblin shapes in the half-light, and gibbered at us in the flickering shadow-tongue.

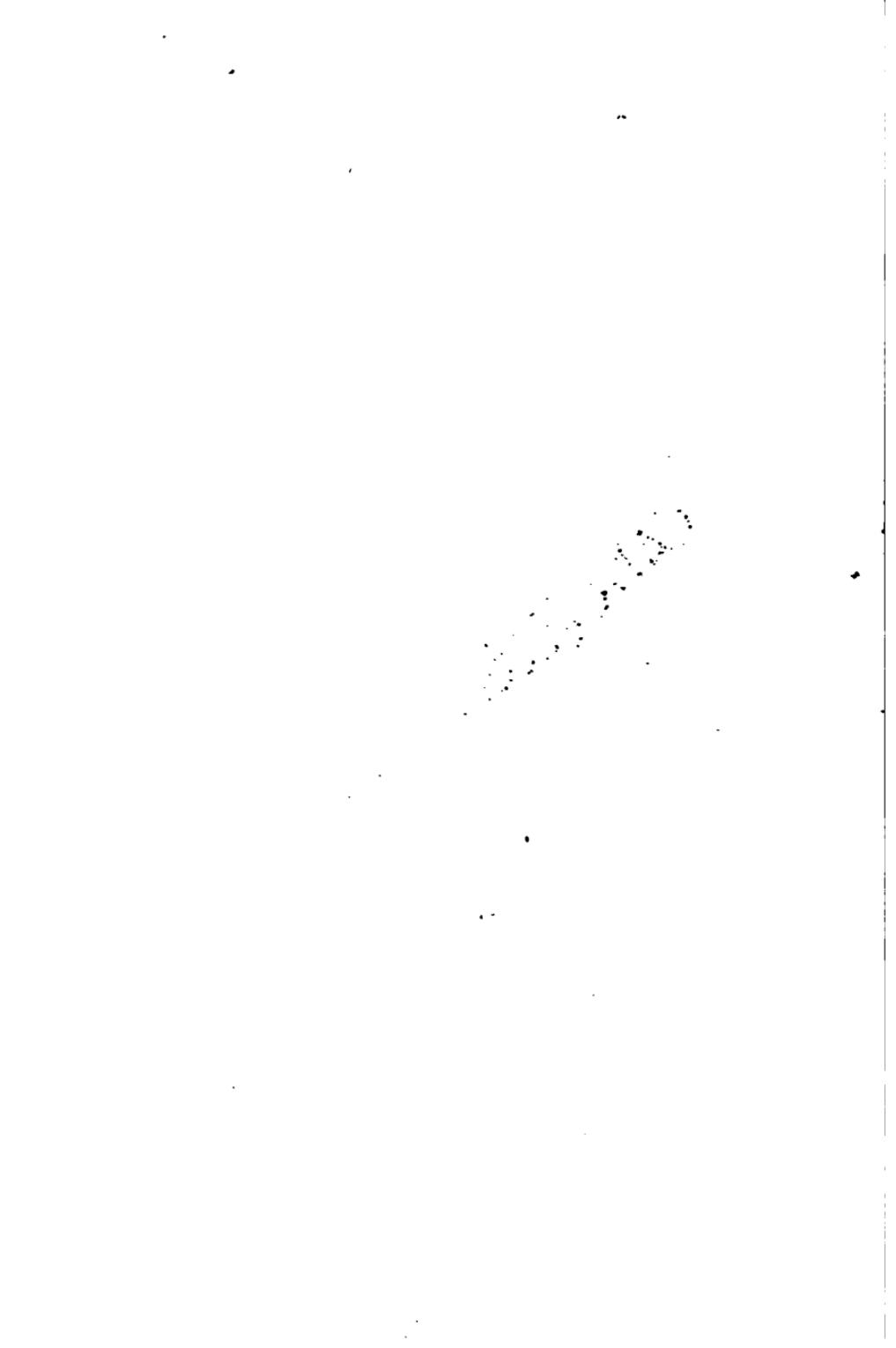
Here three or four friends would stretch in lazy length around the fire. Then perforce decamped the clumsy pause which jealously hounds every casual meeting. Much quiet cogitation there was indeed, but the goggle-eyed silence is foreign to friends. By happy and indolent chance rather than through

formed desire, a book would be chosen from the errant volumes lying to hand, and through the reading of a tuneful page the proud flame followed, as a dim pale shadow, the golden words of a poet of old. Or the sons of Saturday would converse with the ardency which gives youth its inches, and with the frankness which friends alone dare to send booming. And the flame bowed to the master-craftsman, Friendship, at work upon his block. For friends are the heaven-appointed sculptors of men. Though the chisel of authority may give the rough-moulding, these are they, the beloved of the Gods, who alone can fashion the curve that sings. And the chips which a friend's hand sends flying are but the white stones on the road which leads to a closer friendship.

Saturday night knew no end until the light came dropping to earth at the call of cocks. Then friends all stole their several ways, and the fire alone remained, smouldering and drowsy, yet with a friendly blink ever and again to the plumy night, waving his farewell as he rode out upon the shadows.







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